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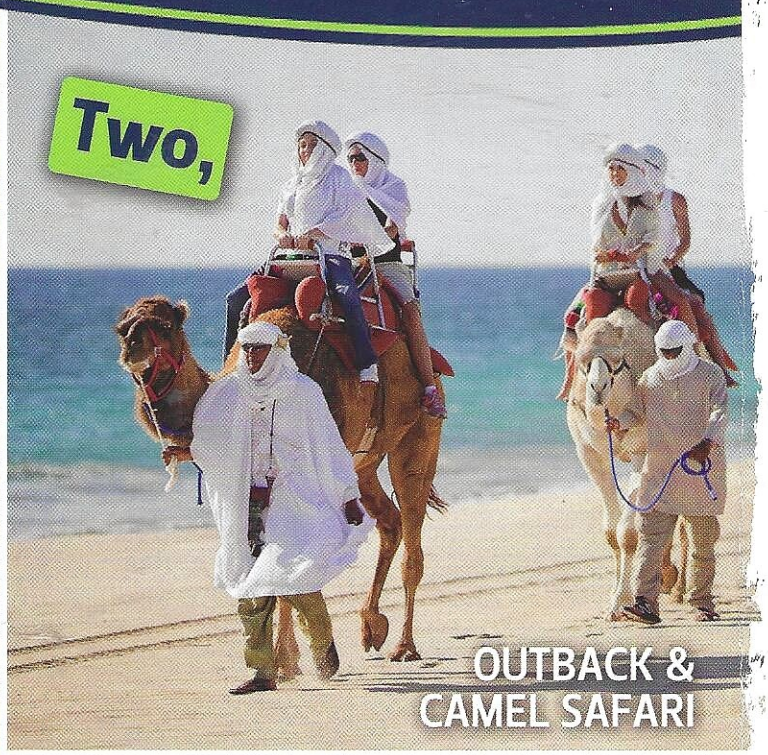

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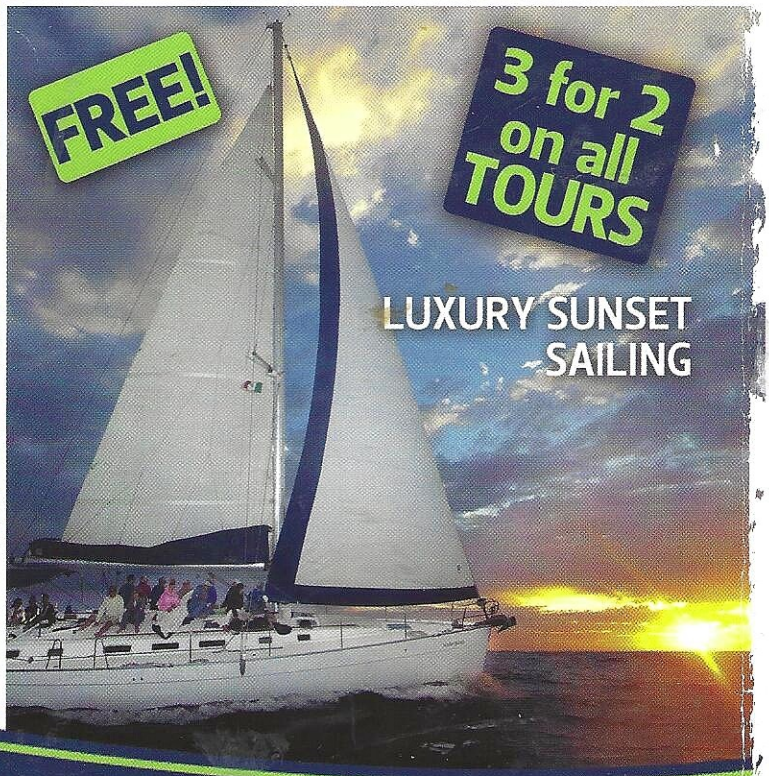

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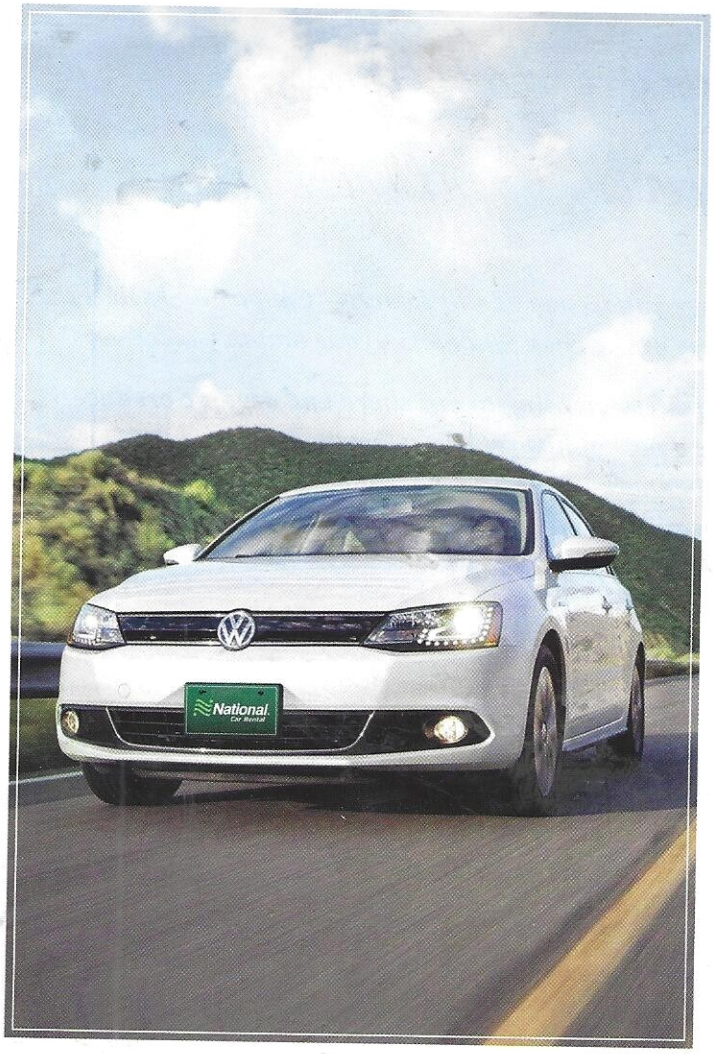

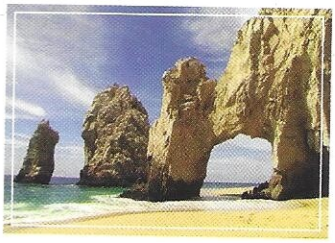

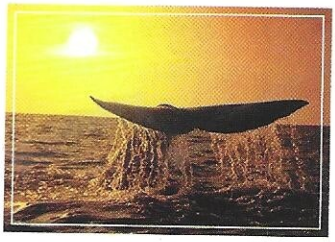

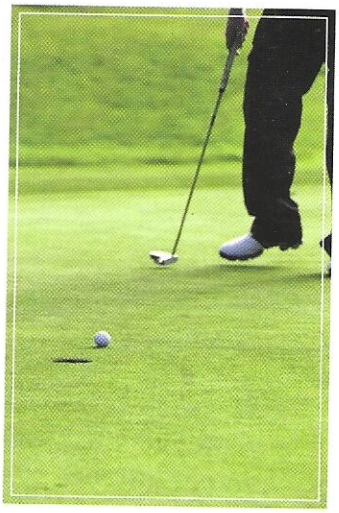

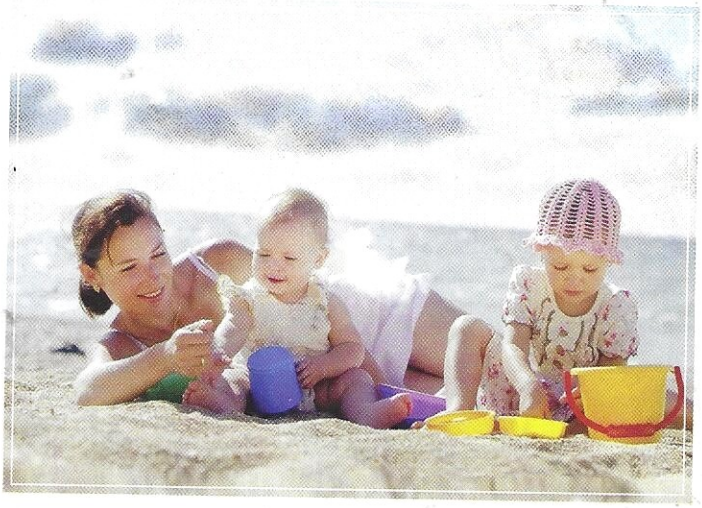

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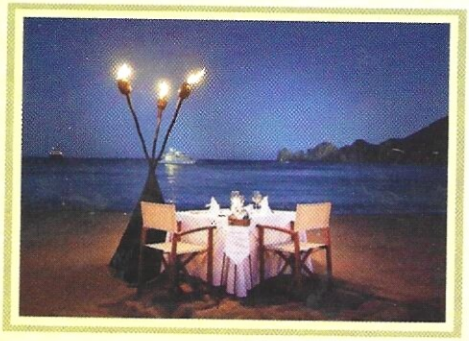

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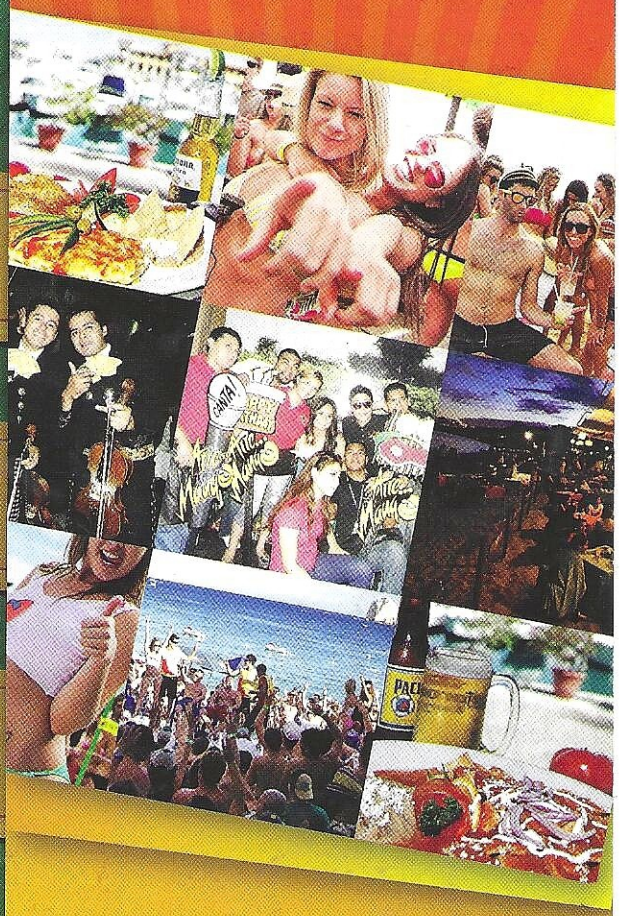

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Letter from the Publisher

While fall may call for cooler temperatures elsewhere in the world, we continue to enjoy summer-like weather here at Land's End. And savvy travelers know to take advantage of the still-quiet months after summer vacation ends and before Los Cabos' high-tourism season picks up in late fall.

In honor of the heat, we've dedicated several articles to activities that help you keep your cool. Begin with "**Wet & Wild**," page 38, which details adventures to be had on the high seas. "**Beach Blanket Bingo**," page 50, is a fun look at Los Cabos' best beaches, including some little-known gems. And, as always, we've included our signature guide to all of **Los Cabos' best activities**, page 54.

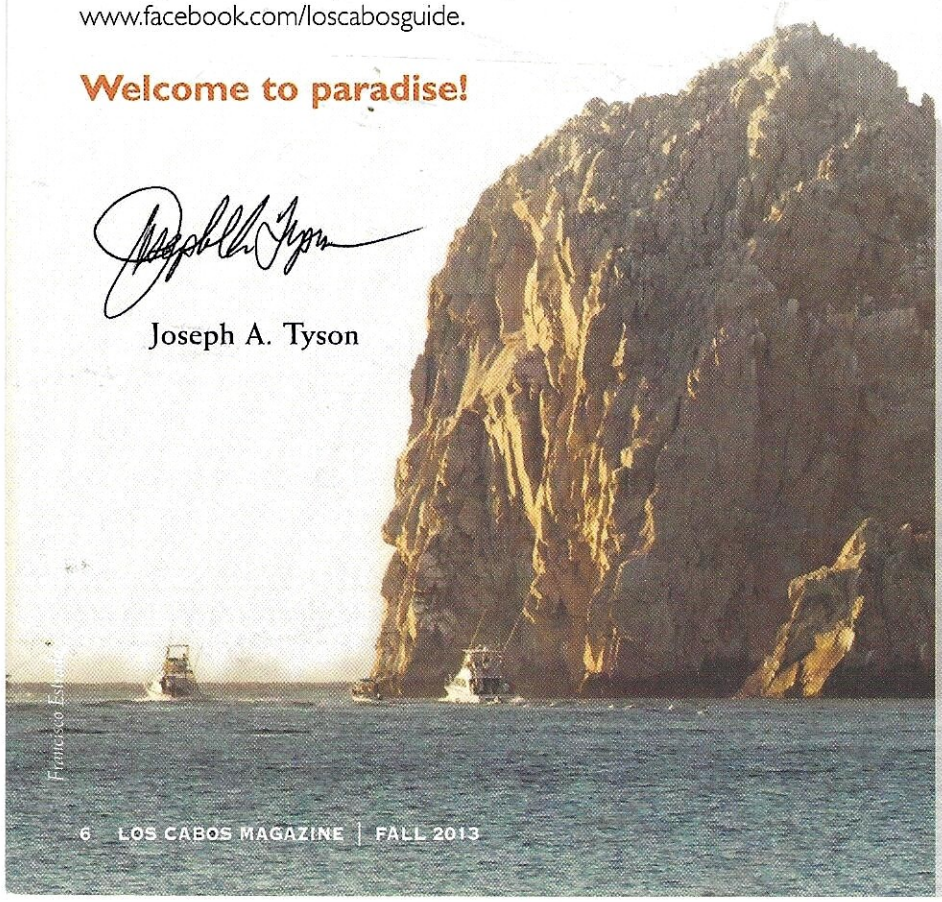
There will be plenty of opportunities to break out your swimsuit, and editor Ashley Alvarado shares tips, page 24, that will have you **packing like a pro**; she also tells you why to leave room in that carry-on. There are other ways to escape the heat, too. We highlight **Los Cabos' high-tech spas**, page 26, and offer an inside look at Cabo San Lucas's most exciting **real estate developments**, page 34.

No issue is complete without our definitive **restaurant guide**, page 70. We've paired it with a breakdown of five dishes that represent "**Quintessential Cabo**," page 64, as well as **a profile of Sunset da Mona Lisa's trio of chefs**, page 95.

We hope these tips will help you enjoy your trip to Los Cabos and invite you to share your vacation pics on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/loscabosguide.

Welcome to paradise!

Joseph A. Tyson



Francisco Estrada

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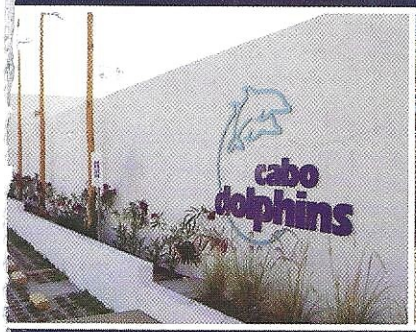

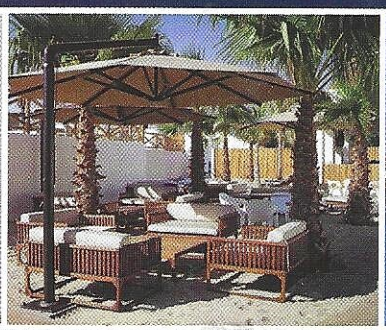

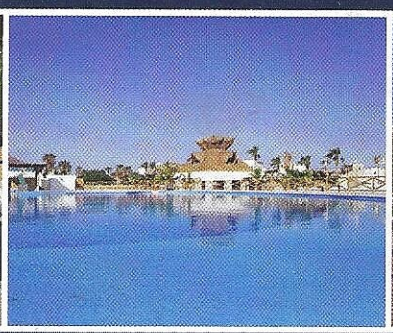

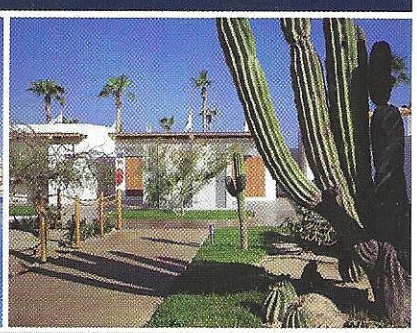

Why Los Cabos is (even) safer than you think

Questions answered and myths debunked

By Chris Sands

U.S. President Barack Obama with Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto in México City.

Courtesy Enrique Peña Nieto

Tourism numbers are up in México. There are record numbers of international travelers arriving from every country and continent with one exception: the United States of America. It's clear México is suffering from an image problem north of the border. In fact, during a recent trip to México, U.S. President Barack Obama said the relationship between the two countries is "trapped in old stereotypes." He continued, "I have come to México because it is time to put old mindsets aside. It's time to recognize new realities, including the impressive progress in today's México."

Mainstream media, it seems, is yet to take its cue. Its coverage often seems to suggest that all of México is beset by cartel-related violence and unsafe for tourists. That simply isn't the case, particularly here in sunny Los Cabos, where the most serious concern tends to be what level SPF to use at the beach.

The fact is, we are more than 1,000 miles from any of the nation's troubled areas—that's the approximate distance between New York City and Iowa City—and our state of Baja California Sur has one of the lowest crime rates in the entire country. Perhaps that is why of the more than 1 million U.S. citizens living in México, close to 80 percent reside on the Baja Peninsula. It's the highest concentration of U.S. expatriates anywhere in the world—by a wide margin.

But for the peace of mind of first-time visitors to our seaside paradise, let's set the record straight and debunk some common misconceptions about safety in Los Cabos.

MYTH: "Los Cabos isn't safe"

Los Cabos is among the safest places in México, and the region has never been mentioned in any of the U.S. State Department's travel advisories. Those are a couple of the reasons Los Cabos has been in such demand as a destination for major international events like the G-20 Summit of world leaders and the Baja International Film Festival in 2012. Another safety indicator is Cabo San Lucas's attractiveness as a cruise ship destination. Cruise companies are exceedingly sensitive to reports of violence, and on those rare occasions when cruise ships have pulled out of Mexican destinations because of safety concerns, the replacement destination has invariably been Los Cabos.

Los Cabos hosted the 2012 G-20 Summit of world leaders.

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THE ART OF ITALIAN BAKING

Joseph Tyson

Various branches of the Mexican military—including this rescue team—work together to ensure the safety of locals and visitors.

MYTH: "I can't wear my wedding ring in Los Cabos"

The tourist areas of Los Cabos are extremely well patrolled by tourist police, whose mandate is to provide help and protection to tourists. That said, there is very little for them to do. Is there crime in Los Cabos? Of course. There is crime everywhere. But the crimes that occur here are primarily the result of carelessness and rarely of organized thievery. Visitors should exercise the same caution they do under normal circumstances at home. Be alert and use common sense, and there is nothing to fear.

MYTH: "There are cartels in Cabo"

Nobody would deny that cartels exist in México; they are one of the country's most serious problems. But I urge visitors or potential visitors to go online and look at one of the maps showing the areas of cartel influence. There is one huge blank spot on these maps, and that is all of the Baja Peninsula south of Tijuana. The cartels traffic in drugs, and because of roadblocks throughout Baja, as well as the interdiction efforts of the Mexican Navy and U.S. Coast Guard, the cartel drug routes completely bypass the state of Baja California Sur.

MYTH: "The military is in Los Cabos because there's a problem"

On the contrary, the military is here to ensure we remain free of the problems that have plagued other areas of the country. Tourism is extremely important to the Mexican economy, and the nation's leaders are committed to protecting their most valuable resources: you. So when you see tourist police or a military presence patrolling the streets, walking along the marina, or checking identification at the cruise ship terminal, this is all part of a concerted effort to ensure that visitors to the area continue to feel safe.

Despite what you may have read, and despite the warnings you may have received from well-meaning friends and family, the odds are that Los Cabos is actually much safer than the place you just left. So relax and enjoy your stay!

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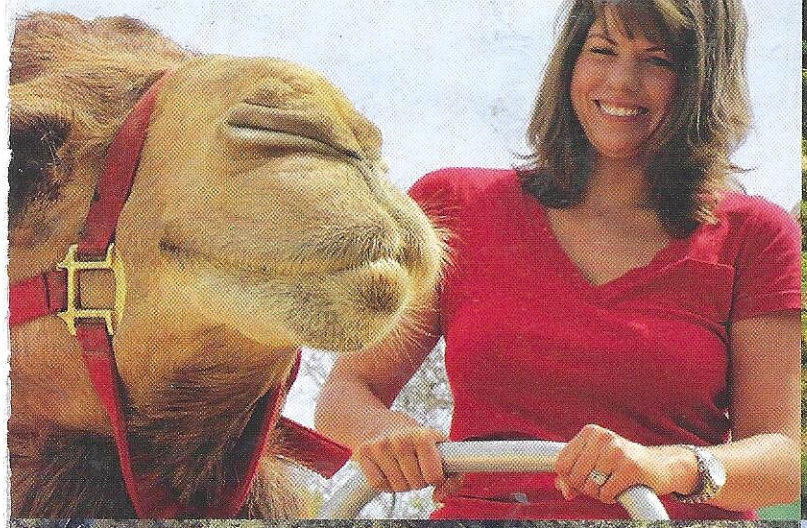

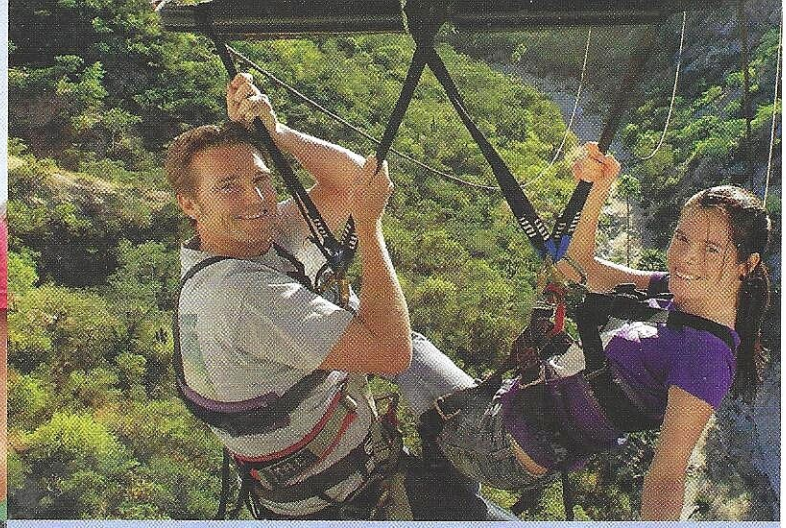

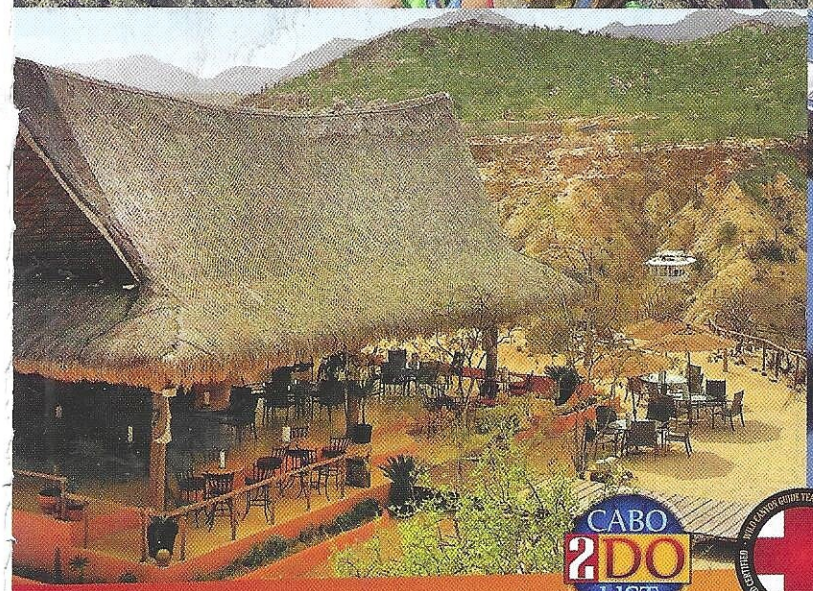

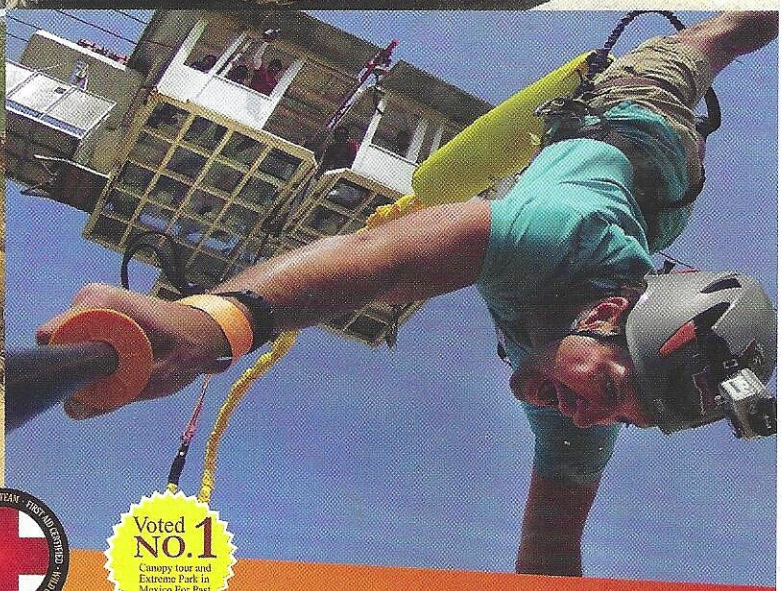

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Francisco Estrada

FALL 2013

issue 34

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Location: Casa California, San José del Cabo
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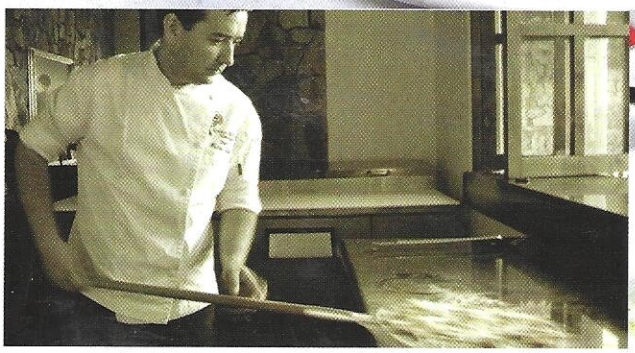

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Mango Cantina Honored with New Award

The sports bar and restaurant on the Cabo San Lucas Marina was recently awarded the prestigious Distintivo M, a sought-after government certification identifying model, modern businesses with consistently superior quality control. Reward yourself by stopping by to catch a game and dine on delicious Mexican fare, fresh local seafood, gourmet coffee, and daily two-for-one beer specials. Go to www.mangocantina.com or call (624) 143-3012 for more information.

Carlos Aboyo

Annual White Party Marks Beginning of Summer

In addition to kicking off Memorial Day weekend and officially announcing the arrival of the summer season in Cabo San Lucas, the annual White Party at Nikki Beach provided the perfect opportunity for the area's smartly dressed set to show off their fashion sense in a stylized ivory-suffused atmosphere. The eighth anniversary party was perhaps the hippest and hottest event to date, with the boutique ME Cabo Hotel playing host to snow-white decor and immaculately attired guests, champagne and cocktails, an impressive fireworks display, and uninhibited dancing to house DJs and the international club music stylings of SAGA Strings and EliZe. Ultimately, this signature seasonal fete didn't so much end as it transitioned into an after-party just before the breakfast hour.

Francisco Estrada

La Pampa Gets a Makeover

The outstanding Argentine restaurant La Pampa this summer unveiled its newly remodeled space, a perfect place to enjoy its signature combination of flavor, ambience, and unparalleled service. You will feel as though you've been transported to Buenos Aires. The international wine list pairs excellently with expertly prepared steaks that will have you planning return visits before you've ever left. To learn more about La Pampa, call (624) 144-4939 or go to www.lapamparestaurante.com.

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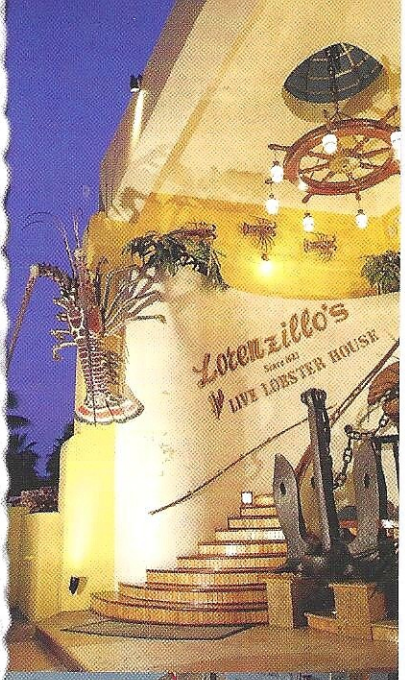

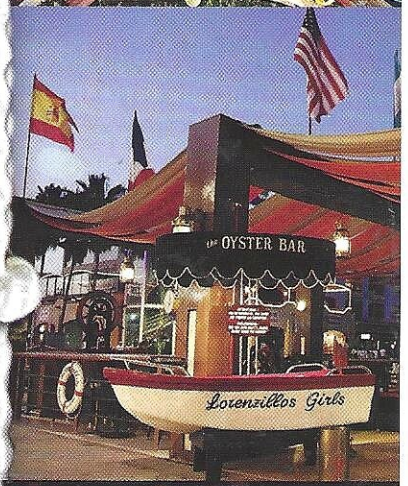

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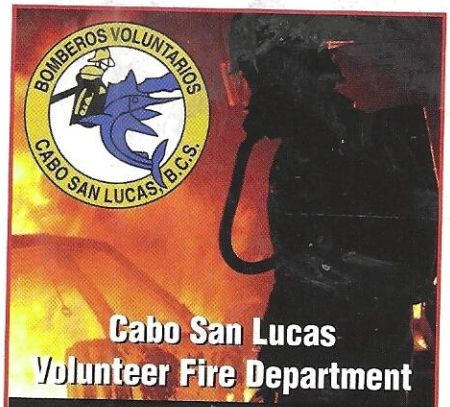

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Los Cabos

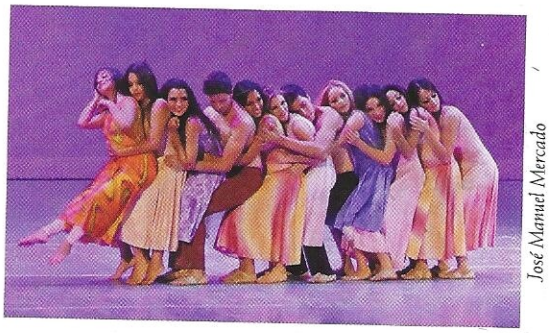
• Talk of the Town •

Second Annual 'A Taste of Capella' Brings Master Chefs to Los Cabos

Foodies descended on Cabo San Lucas in July for the exclusive second annual "A Taste of Capella" food and wine celebration. Some 120 people gained entry to the festivities, which included wine and cheese tastings, tequila seminars, and a beach barbecue alongside some of the world's top chefs. Among them: Kent Rathburn, founder of Abacus in Dallas, as well as a half-dozen other highly regarded Texas-based restaurants; Dean Fearing, founder of Fearing's Restaurants, the original of which was once ranked as Esquire's restaurant of the year; Tim Hollingsworth, winner of the prestigious Bocuse d'Or and James Beard Rising Chef of the Year awards for his work at the famed French Laundry; and Philippe Schmit, Master Chef of France designee, former executive chef at New York fine dining landmark Orsay, and chef-owner of Houston's Philippe Restaurant + Lounge.

Cabo San Lucas Cultural Pavilion Turns 2

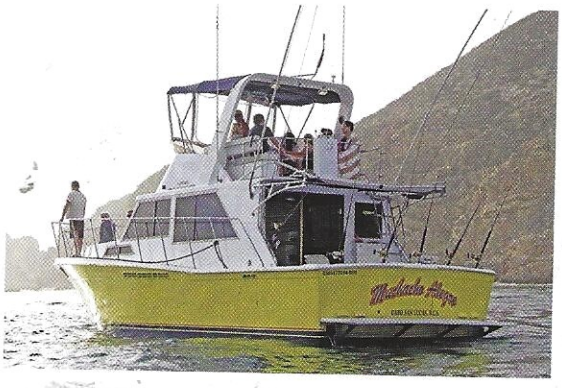
In May, local musicians, dancers, and artists turned out to celebrate the second anniversary of the Cabo San Lucas Cultural Pavilion, under the direction of Gregorio Canales. Dance, music, singing, plastic art, cinema, and photography filled the theater. Among the performers were the Colegio Papalotl children's choir directed by Carolina Elizaldi, the powerful voice of Mónica Rojas, and a performance by Estudio del Ángel under the direction of Luciano Gómez and Euridice Aretos.



José Manuel Mercado

New Ways to Reach Silverados Sportfishing

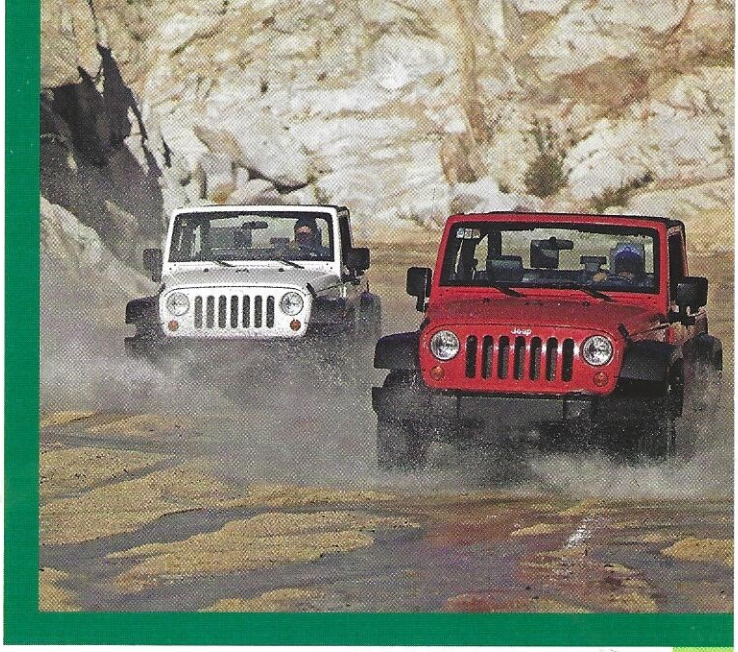
For more than 25 years, visiting anglers have turned to Silverados Sportfishing to find the perfect charter boat and captain for your needs. The large fleet of charter boats range from a 23-foot *panga* that accommodate up to three passengers to the 44-foot Muchacho Alegre, which accommodates up to 12 passengers. Silverados recently introduced new contact numbers (619-600-5570 as a domestic call from the United States or 011-52-624-144-4903 to call from the United States to México). You can always go online to read testimonials and learn more about the charter options: www.silveradosportfishing.com.



Carlos Aboyo

The Open Road

NATIONAL HAS THE KEYS TO YOUR LOS CABOS ADVENTURE



Whether your vacation plans include family-friendly beach excursions, stylish five-star restaurants and world-class golf courses, or off-road explorations of remote and ruggedly beautiful locales, National has the keys to your Los Cabos adventure.

With more than 37 years of experience in México—including 25 in Los Cabos— National has long been the place to go for safe and reliable rentals at affordable rates. It has a well-earned reputation for friendly and professional service. The company is so well known for its service that one could too easily overlook National's unmatched variety of four-wheeled options, which range from mileage-friendly economy models to spacious sedans, vans and sport utility vehicles that can accommodate a weekend's worth of outdoor equipment or transport a wedding party from pristine beach to hillside villa.

Not only can you go like a pro with National but you can also experience Los Cabos like a local: with easy access to the region's treasure trove of historic and cultural monuments, as well as Baja California Sur's majestic layout of mountains, desert terrains, and scenic ocean vistas.

Traveling on a budget? Try one of National's economy-class options, and see more of Baja California Sur at a lower price than you'd expect. Journey to La Paz for a walk along the state capital's scenic waterfront esplanade. Enjoy explorations of Todos Santos, with its gorgeous brick buildings, numerous art galleries, and historic Hotel California, or drop in for cool jazz and surfer chic at Cerritos. Fuel-efficient economy and intermediate class cars at National turn all of Baja California Sur into your vacation playground.

Family trip? Load up the minivan, and head to one of Los Cabos' many beautiful beaches. Sprawling Médano Beach in Cabo San Lucas as well as Tourist Corridor beaches like Santa María and Chileno offer ample opportunities for fun in the sun, water-based activities, and the simple joy of sandcastle building by the Sea of Cortés. Are your little ones not so little anymore? How about a day trip to Baja's biggest theme park, go-kart racing, or a visit to the zoo in Santiago?

High style in Baja is found in the comfort and class of a top-of-the-line sport utility vehicle. Throw the Big Bertha driver in your bag and visit the area's incredible collection of golfing layouts by champions like Jack Nicklaus, Greg Norman, Tom Weiskopf, Gary Player, and Davis Love III. Or let the valet do the parking while you enjoy one of Los Cabos many first-class fine dining restaurants, which boast fresh local seafood, warm welcoming service, and stunning seaside views.

Of course, if you really want an adventure you'll remember for a lifetime, rent a Jeep and explore the natural wonders of Baja California Sur's untrammeled East Cape. Visit Cabo Pulmo for the best snorkeling and diving in North America. The offshore marine sanctuary boasts the oldest living coral reef in the Western Hemisphere, and it has the highest concentration of marine life found anywhere in the Gulf of California. Farther up the coast, the postcard-pretty communities of Los Barriles and Buenavista offer small-town charm, and world-class fishing and windsports.

Fact is, it's virtually impossible to go wrong with National's superb slate of cars, minivans, SUVs, and Jeeps. Safe yet sleek rides are always available, with reasonable rates across the board.

What are you waiting for? Drop by one of the company's many convenient Los Cabos locations and let National take you where you want to go.

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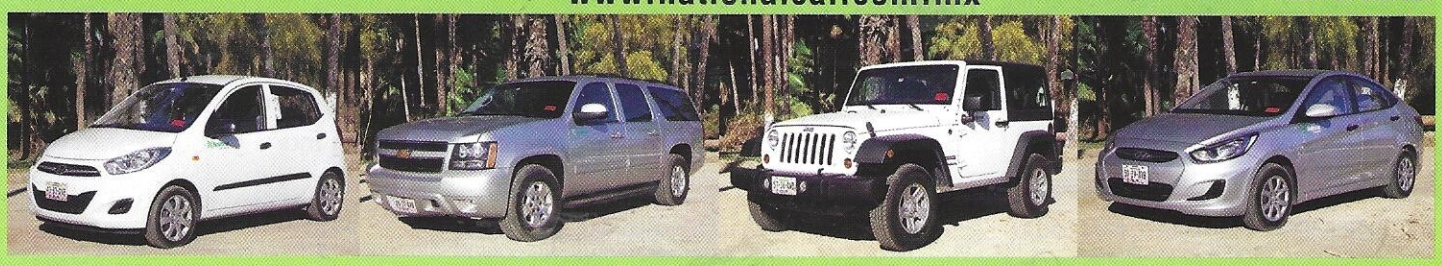

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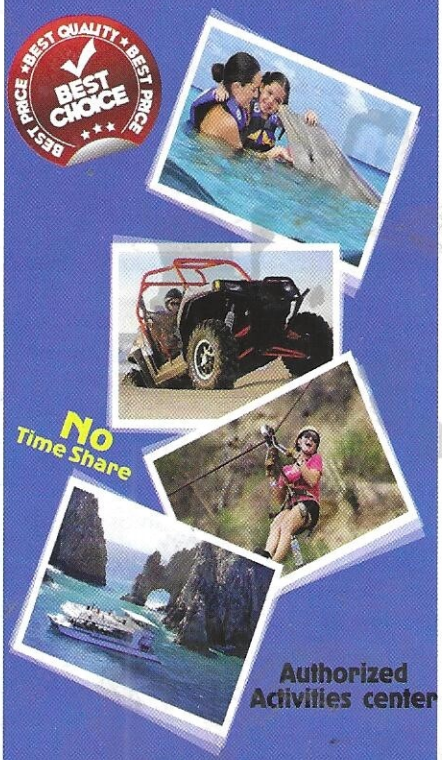

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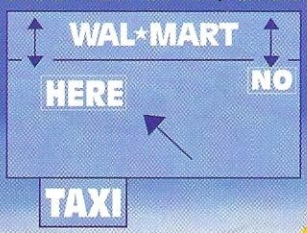

Welcome

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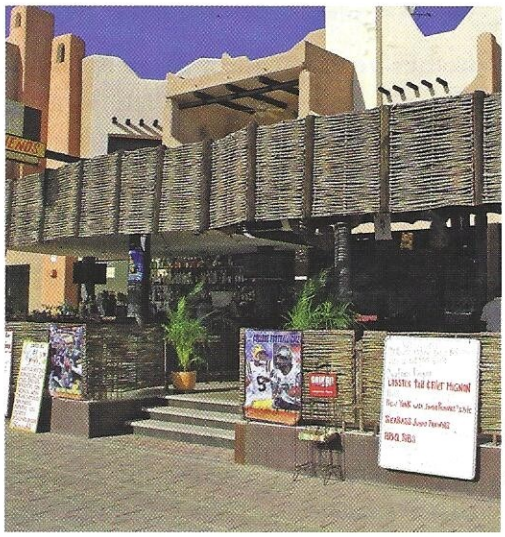
Los Cabos

• Talk of the Town •

Mis Sueños Restaurant Expands

The popular Cabo San Lucas restaurant Mis Sueños ("My Dreams") has doubled its marina frontage. The new space allows owners Poncho Parra and Victor Lujan to even better serve their patrons, many of whom bring freshly caught fish to be cooked in one of the restaurant's five preparations. The newly redesigned menu still has all your favorite breakfast, lunch, and dinner items. For more information, call (624) 143-0981.



Miguel Ventura

Wyndham Spa Reopens

The newly reopened Aura spa at Wyndham Cabo San Lucas Report has an ideal location right on the Cabo San Lucas Marina, nestled nicely in the heart of downtown Cabo San Lucas. Retreat here after a day of golf or fishing, sunbathing or shopping for any of the treatments off the full-service spa menu. Among the offerings: a humidifying exfoliation with cocoa and vanilla and the equalizing facial, a must for those with oily skin. To learn more, call (624) 173-9300.

Courtesy Wyndham Cabo San Lucas

Rámuri Generates Buzz in Downtown Cabo

There's a revolution brewing in downtown Los Cabos. The newest addition to Cabo San Lucas's nightlife and dining scene has been a popular one. Rámuri Cerveza Artesanal Mexicana opened early this year, and it has made a big splash with its expansive restaurant, bar, microbrewery, and rooftop beer garden. The partnership between local restaurateur Edith Jimenez and Tijuana-based craft brew specialists Cervecería Rámuri enjoys a privileged block-long location near Puerto Paraiso in downtown Cabo San Lucas. In addition to an indoor dining area bounded by an open kitchen and climate-controlled beer-making facilities, there is an enormous rooftop area devoted to alfresco dining and enough flat-screen, high-definition televisions to qualify the place as the largest sports bar in Los Cabos. Go to www.cervezaramuri.com to learn more.

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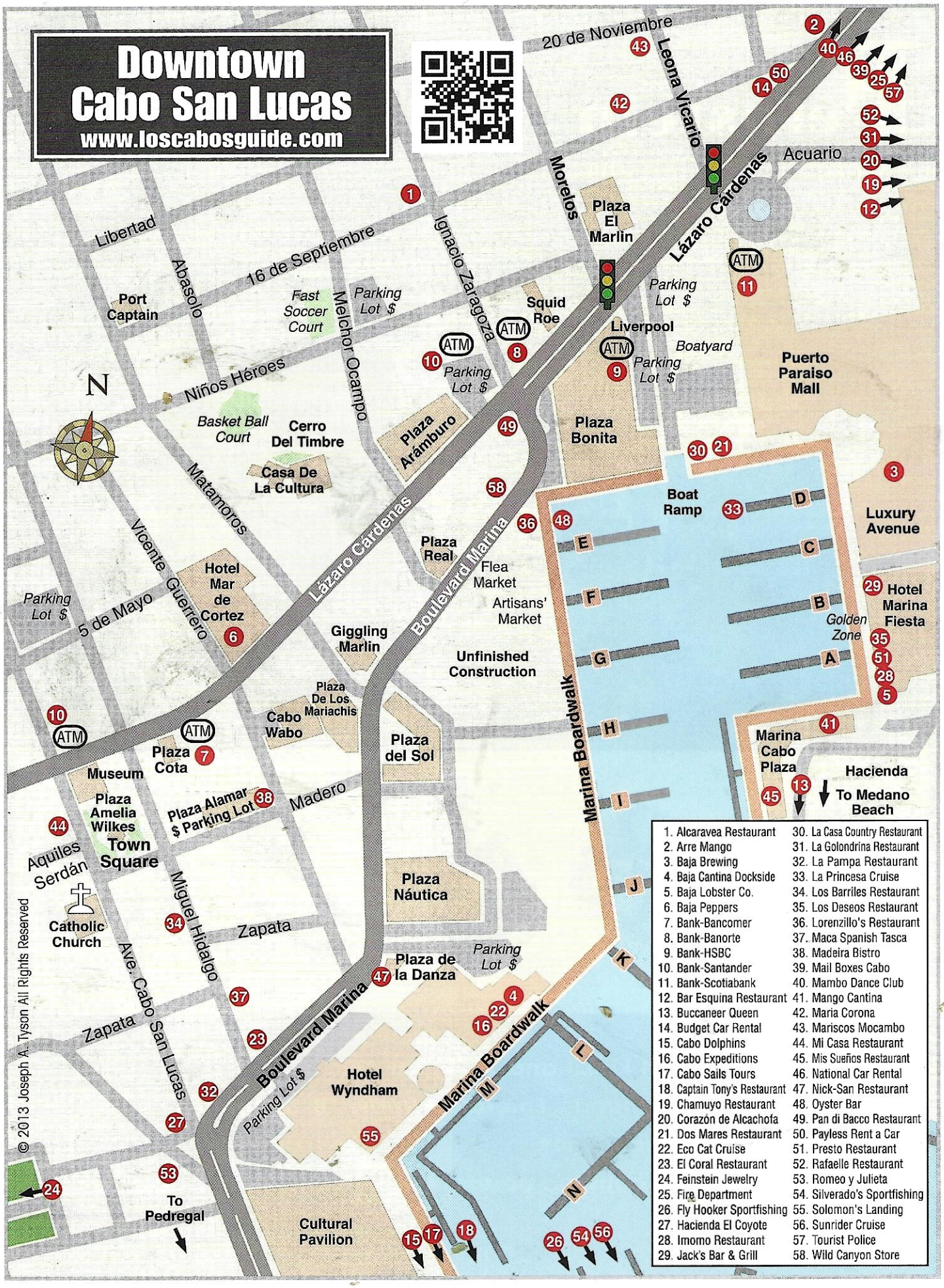
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Zapata
Plaza Náutica
Ave. Cabo San Lucas
Plaza de la Danza
Hotel Wyndham
Cultural Pavilion
To Pedregal
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1. Alcaravea Restaurant
2. Arre Mango
3. Baja Brewing
4. Baja Cantina Dockside
5. Baja Lobster Co.
6. Baja Peppers
7. Bank-Bancomer
8. Bank-Banorte
9. Bank-HSBC
10. Bank-Santander
11. Bank-Scotiabank
12. Bar Esquina Restaurant
13. Buccaneer Queen
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16. Cabo Expeditions
17. Cabo Sails Tours
18. Captain Tony's Restaurant
19. Chamuyo Restaurant
20. Corazón de Alcachofa
21. Dos Mares Restaurant
22. Eco Cat Cruise
23. El Coral Restaurant
24. Feinstein Jewelry
25. Fire Department
26. Fly Hooker Sportfishing
27. Hacienda El Coyote
28. Imomo Restaurant
29. Jack's Bar & Grill
30. La Casa Country Restaurant
31. La Golondrina Restaurant
32. La Pampa Restaurant
33. La Princesa Cruise
34. Los Barriles Restaurant
35. Los Deseos Restaurant
36. Lorenzillo's Restaurant
37. Maca Spanish Tasca
38. Madeira Bistro
39. Mail Boxes Cabo
40. Mambo Dance Club
41. Mango Cantina
42. Maria Corona
43. Mariscos Mocambo
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45. Mis Sueños Restaurant
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47. Nick-San Restaurant
48. Oyster Bar
49. Pan di Bacco Restaurant
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51. Presto Restaurant
52. Rafaelle Restaurant
53. Romeo y Julieta
54. Silverado's Sportfishing
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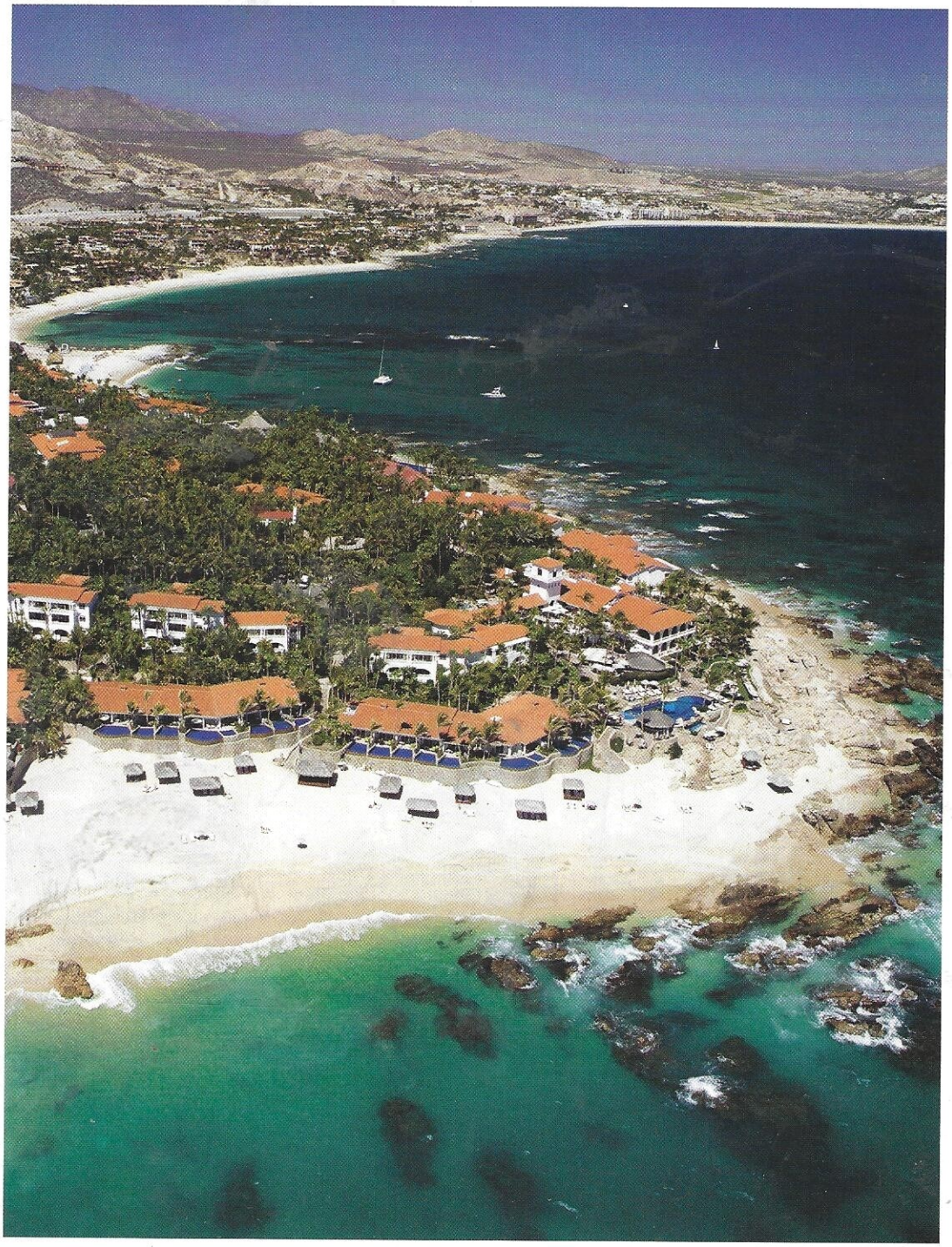

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Capturing Life

Our *No-Stress* Guide to Packing the Perfect Suitcase

By Ashley Alvarado

Illustration: Antonio Vargas

When frequent travel is part of your job description, knowing how to pack a proper suitcase is a must. Whether you are traveling for work or fun, developing that skill will undoubtedly save you time, money, and heartache—especially on international flights. After landing in Los Cabos, you must first go through Immigration, collect checked luggage, and go through Customs. Cutting out one step makes a big difference.

Prices and policies vary, but several airlines charge up to $50 U.S. for a single checked suitcase. Whenever possible, you want to stick to one rolling carry-on and a personal item that fits comfortably under the seat in front of you. (Double-check the dimensions of the overhead compartments when making plane reservations.)

Now, what to pack? Every time I have a trip coming up, I pick out all the clothes and accessories I want to take with me. And then, thanks to some very good advice I received years ago, I put half the clothes away. For a typical five-day

trip to Los Cabos, I suggest five tops, two pairs of pants or shorts, and one sweater or lightweight rain jacket. Women may also want to bring a dress or two depending on dinner plans. Of course, everyone will want undergarments and swimwear. Aim to keep clothes within the same color family for more flexibility in dressing while on vacation; you can use accessories to make outfits pop. If you have wrinkle-resistant clothes, opt for those. Shoes tend to take up the most room, so choose wisely—will you be on the beach, out at dinner, or hiking?—and wear the bulkiest shoes on the plane. The same rule applies to clothes and accessories; keep fine jewelry on your body while traveling. (See checklist on right for other must-pack items.)

Different types of clothing require different approaches to packing. Begin by setting your shoes to the side. Roll softer clothes—think knitwear or pretty much anything made of cotton. Those items go into the suitcase first, followed by a layer of folded jeans and other stiffer pieces of clothing. To avoid wrinkling, you can top this layer with a dry cleaning bag. Keep your suitcase smelling fresh by inserting a fragrant dryer sheet. If there are any items you anticipate needing first or in a pinch, place them on top of the dry cleaning bag. Loop belts, ties, and scarves around the perimeter of the suitcase. Make the most of space by tucking miscellaneous smaller items inside your shoes: phone chargers, waterproof cameras, and a jewelry case or generic container with inexpensive jewelry in it. Drop your shoes into resealable plastic bags, then right into your carry-on.

Save room for all your beauty and hygiene products. The biggest challenge to carry-on-only travel can be a reliance on certain products or brands. Make things easy for yourself by getting on the website www.3floz.com and ordering TSA-approved-size products like hand cream and self-tanner. All liquid products must be in containers 3 fluid ounces or smaller and kept in a clear plastic bag. This bag should be the last thing to go in your suitcase, so that you can easily extract it when going through airport security.

You'll also want to save room for mementos. Pop into Puerto Paraiso for an affordable beach bag and hat. Few things are more annoying than having to carry a floppy hat through the airport, but you'll be grateful for the sun protection. Should you forget any necessities, you can go to Wal-Mart or City Club.

The Packing List

Keep in your personal item:

- Passport
- Driver's license
- Health insurance card
- Printouts of your reservations and important phone numbers
- Glasses and/or contact lenses (plus an extra pair)
- Sunglasses
- Cell phone (call your service provider beforehand if you plan to use your phone in México and be sure to list a contact as ICE, or In Case of Emergency, on your phone)
- Headphones
- Antibacterial wipes
- Lip balm with SPF 15
- Prescriptions
- Magazines to get you through takeoff, landing, and sunbathing sessions (take extras; prices are marked up at airports and in México)

Keep in your carry-on:

- Copy of your passport (you'll also want to leave one back home)
- Swimsuit cover-up
- Aloe vera gel
- Lotion
- Brush or comb
- Deodorant
- Face cleanser
- Floss
- Insect repellant
- Feminine hygiene products (Los Cabos stores don't necessarily carry the same products)
- Razors and shaving gel
- Shampoo, soap, and conditioner
- Sunscreen
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Money
- Waterproof camera
- Chargers for your cell phone, cameras, and laptop

By Ashley Alvarado

Sit Back & Relax

Courtesy Ventajas Residences

The high-tech chairs at La Purísima give you a shiatsu massage during your pedicure.

The evolution of Los Cabos spas

We are living in a digital age. Everything is changing, and the everyday increasingly looks like Tomorrow Land. As a rule, cars no longer require keys, books no longer come with pages, and there's no need to whip out a wallet when you can pay for that Starbucks latte with an iPhone. We can rejoice then in our retreats to Los Cabos, which has long been a destination for city slickers seeking to unwind and, more importantly, unplug. But should we not want to turn off entirely, there are options here, too.

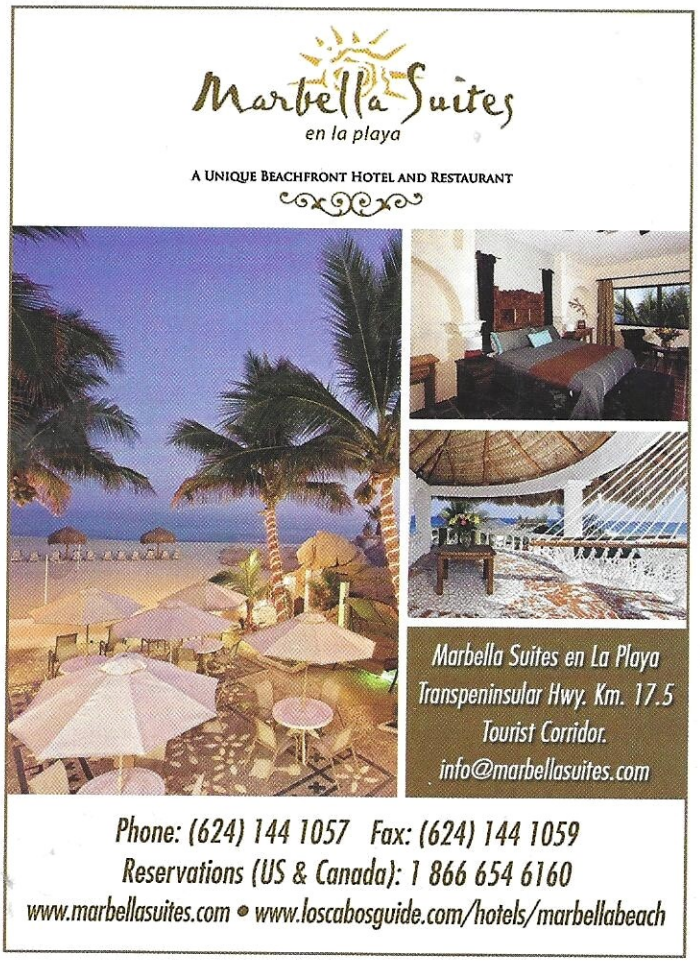
Forward-minded spas in Cabo San Lucas, San José del Cabo, and the Tourist Corridor that connects them have found ways to seamlessly incorporate into their treatment menus technology that allows clients to relax, indulge the senses, and leave looking—and feeling—rejuvenated. In this article, we will highlight some of our favorite spas and their decidedly high-tech services.

La Purísima Salón & Spa

Ventanas Residences' on-site spa and salon is available not just to residents of the plush master-planned community but also to all of Los Cabos—locals and visitors alike. It's a good thing, too, because this darling venue is an absolute treasure. Skilled estheticians and massage therapists work their magic inside smartly appointed rooms that celebrate the tree of life and the four elements. There are nods to the past—clear celebrations of the country's rich history and traditions—as well as an embracing of modern approaches to health and wellness. Pair a hot stone massage with a special anticelulite or reducing treatment. Or you can upgrade a hydrating or calming facial with add-ons like the caviar and pearl anti-aging treatment. Traveling with family and want to treat the little ones? La Purísima also offers a kids' menu, complete with mini manis, pedis, facials, and massages for children ages 4 to 12. For a special occasion, opt for the "Mommy & Me" package. *La Purísima Salón & Spa, Ventanas Residences, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 131-5368, www.ventanasresidences.com.*

Mar Adentro Spa & Wellness Clinic

It's easy to talk the talk, but Mónica Díaz Rivera's Mar Adentro Spa & Wellness Center has long walked the walk when it comes to holistic wellbeing. The aptly named center (its name means the "sea inside") is located just outside the affluent Pedregal development, but its services are decidedly accessible. The prices are reasonable, and their value is obvious. Three times a week, you can pop in to shop for groceries at the on-site organic market. Stick around for breakfast or lunch at Penny Lane's Cafe. And, come dinnertime, treat yourself to a "surprise" dinner at Casianos, the recently launched dinner concept. (Read more about Casianos in our dining guide, page 75.) The wellness center provides a wide array of services, ranging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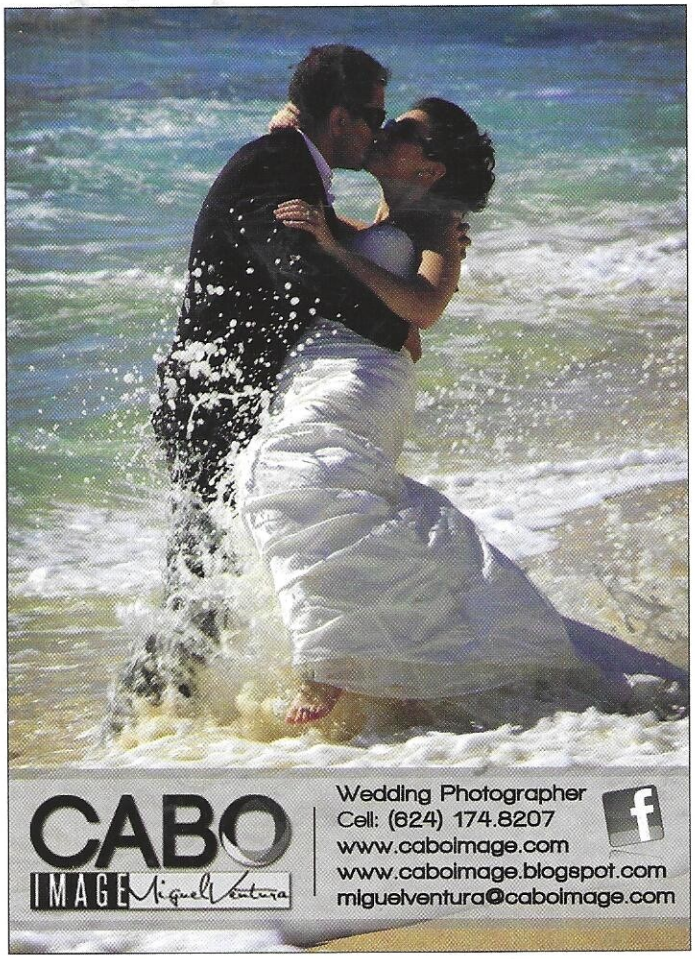

from low-tech to high-tech, that are meant to improve your internal and external wellbeing. The list of services and treatments is long and impressive: It includes but is not limited to IV therapy, HCG diets and cleanses, hydrocolon therapy, gastroenterology, lymphatic drain therapy, and more traditional spa treatments like Botox, facial rejuvenation, and anti-aging serums. This is what we like to call one-stop spa-ing. *Mar Adentro Spa & Wellness Center, Camino del Colegio 225, just off Miguel Angel Herrera, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 172-0129, www.maradentrospa.com.*

Spa Cielo Laser and Wellness Center

Home to what may very well be the best no-frills, full-body massage in all of Los Cabos, Spa Cielo Laser and Wellness Center also boasts one of the most robust and high-tech service menus. The website reads, "A true medical spa, Spa Cielo Laser and Wellness Center, blends art and science to make patients look [and] feel better than they ever thought possible without surgery." This is no understatement. Begin your visit to Spa Cielo—which is located toward the southern end of San José del Cabo—with a VISIA Digital Complexion Analysis. A Space Age-looking image booth scans patients' skin and records surface and subsurface conditions like wrinkles, spots, pores, unevenness, and photodamage. That reading allows Spa Cielo to design a specific-to-you treatment and skincare plan. Part of that treatment plan may include 3-D skin rejuvenation (yes, it is as cool as it sounds), laser genesis for pores and texture, the signature Heavenly-Hydration O2 Facial (the anti-aging treatment plumps lips, diminishes lines, and revitalizes), or even a nonsurgical facelift. But there are many, many more treatments, too, ranging from lash extensions, VersaSpa tans, and permanent makeup to Botox, nonsurgical muscle tightening, Lipotron body sculpting, and a hyperbaric oxygen tank. *Spa Cielo Laser and Wellness Center, San José del Cabo, (624) 105-2209, www.spa-cielo.com.*

Aura Spa at Wyndham Cabo San Lucas Resort

Tucked away in the heart of downtown Cabo San Lucas is Aura, the newly reopened spa at Wyndham Cabo San Lucas Resort. The marina-front location makes Aura an ideal spa destination for hotel guests and Los Cabos visitors. After a day of golf or fishing, sunbathing or shopping, retreat to the Cabo San Lucas Marina resort for utter relaxation and, maybe, some post-sun rejuvenation. The full-service spa offers, among its other treatments, massage therapy, body wraps and facials, aromatherapy, and nail services. More traditional treatments are modernized by the innovative

incorporation of ingredients like lemon grass and tea tree for a detoxifying body wrap or coconut and lime for a reinvigorating manicure. Get a humidifying exfoliation with cocoa and vanilla, or opt for the equalizing facial (a must for those with oily skin). *Aura Spa, Wyndham Cabo San Lucas Resort, Boulevard Marina S/N, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 173-9300, www.wyndham.com.*

*To learn more about spas in Cabo San Lucas, San José del Cabo, the Tourist Corridor, and the surrounding area, visit www.loscabosguide.com. You will find location information as well as some sample or excerpted spa menus.

Courtesy Wyndham Cabo San Lucas Resort

Aura Spa at Wyndham Cabo San Lucas Resort reinvents traditional treatments—like massages and facials—with innovative ingredients.

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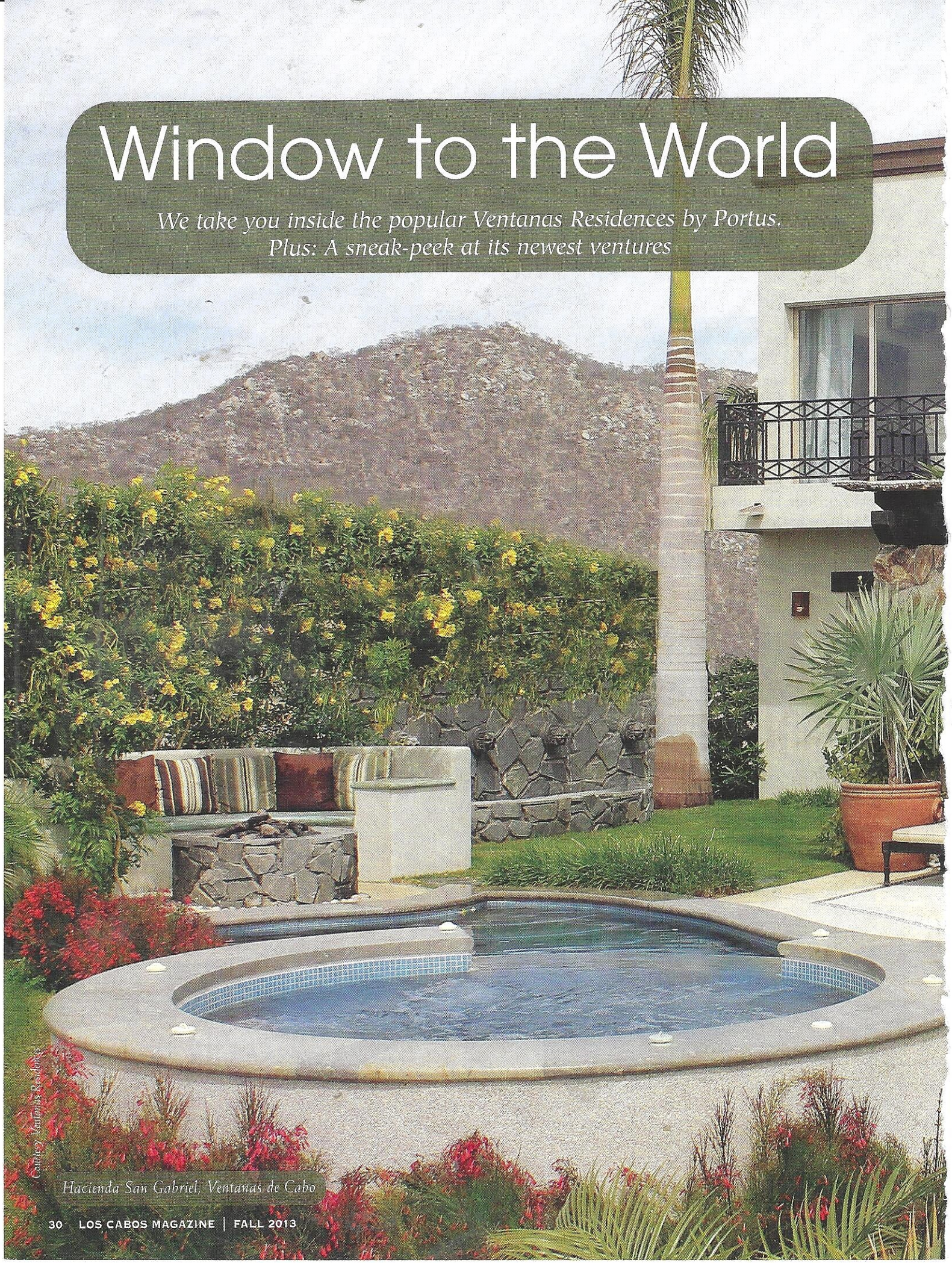
Window to the World

We take you inside the popular Ventanas Residences by Portus. Plus: A sneak-peek at its newest ventures



Courtesy Ventanas Residences

Hacienda San Gabriel, Ventanas de Cabo

By Carol S. Billups

The Portus Group is legendary within Los Cabos real estate circles. Unlike many of its counterparts, Portus Group did not experience a downturn with the Great Recession. Instead its ultra-successful Ventanas Residences projects in Cabo San Lucas continue to nearly sell out inventory during the pre-construction phase. The three Ventanas Cabo master-planned communities (also known as Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III) combine single-family homes and condominiums in an elegant setting. The centerpiece of each is an amenities-packed clubhouse. The Club at Ventanas del Mar includes such features as two pools (one reserved for adults), hot tubs, fire pits, a fitness center, a full-service spa, a multimedia lounge, a Home Store, a market offering freshly baked breads and sweets, three restaurants, access to private yachts, a kids' club, and a nondenominational chapel. If you don't feel like venturing out, the restaurants deliver room service.

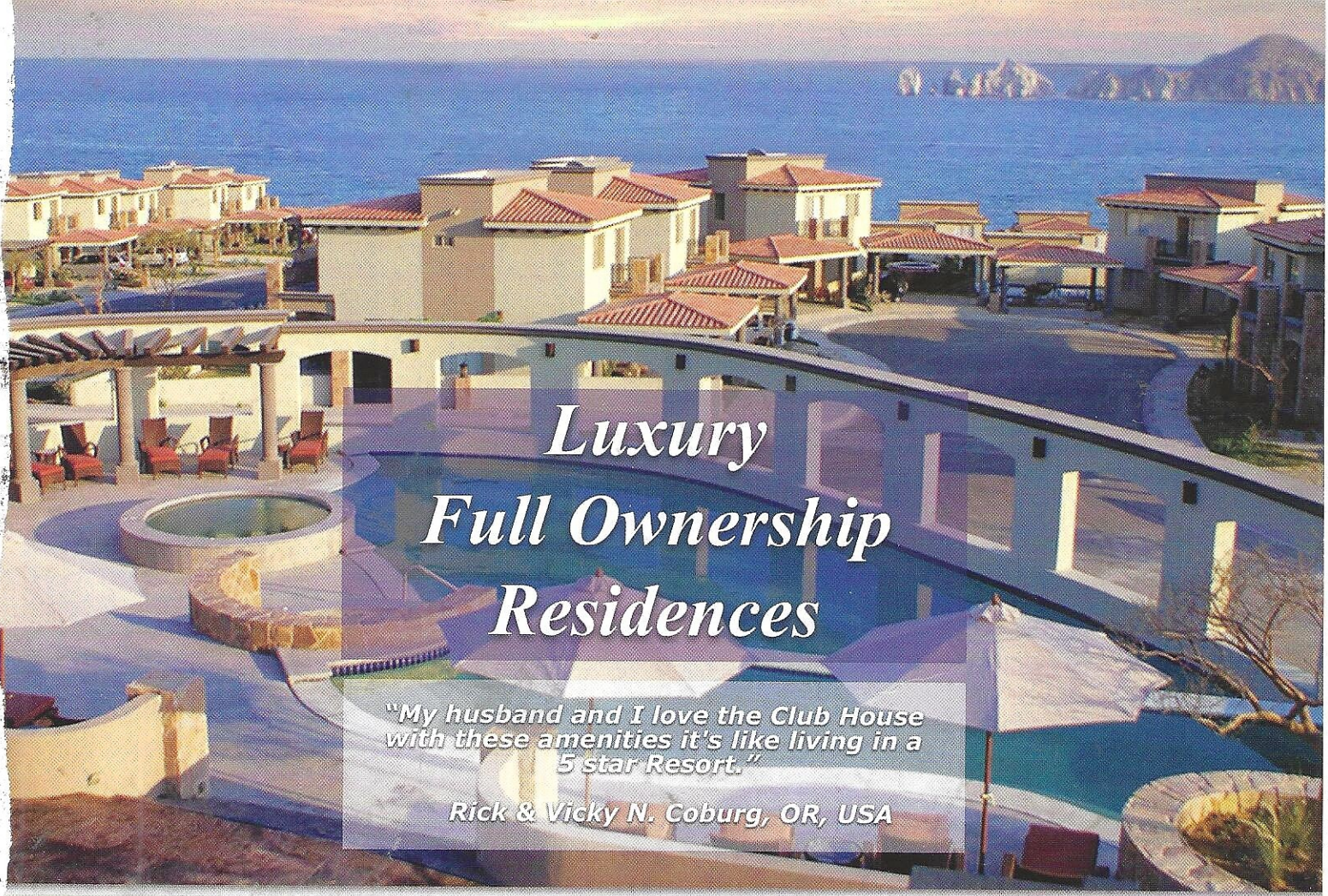
Enjoy Santitos Restaurant at Ventanas Residences.

Courtesy Ventanas Residences

Living in a Portus property, says marketing director José Acosta, feels like living in your own hotel. There are units available in Ventanas de Cabo (Phase III-B), and some units are available in all phases. To try out this lifestyle, consider dining at the Santitos Restaurant in Ventanas del Mar, which is open to the public and offers excellent food at modest prices.

Rather than do a fourth phase of Ventanas, Portus introduced the Cabo del Mar Ocean and Ecopark Village. Having noted that Los Cabos lacked a nature park, Portus Group decided to offer single-family homes and condos within a series of natural parks. The parks will each have a theme and be accessible from residences (no street crossing required). Pedestrian and family-friendly Cabo del Mar Village will offer a clubhouse with all the amenities of Portus's projects, but it will include more outdoor amenities like cycle paths, gardens, and an amphitheater. Condominiums in Cabo del Mar Village start at $99,000 U.S., and single-family homes start at about $150,000 U.S. There are numerous upgrade packages available at reasonable prices, and all homes will come with a one-year warranty. Portus Group expects to start delivering pre-sold homes in 2014.

If that weren't enough, Portus Group has just announced its newest venture: Soleado Beach & Spa Resort. This elegant condo-hotel will be located on the popular swim and surf beach Costa Azul in San José del Cabo. Only 20 units will be offered; prices start at approximately $400,000 U.S. (unheard of for beachfront residences). All of the residences will be delivered furnished, and owners will be encouraged to participate in a hotel rental program. For more information, go to www.grupoportus.com



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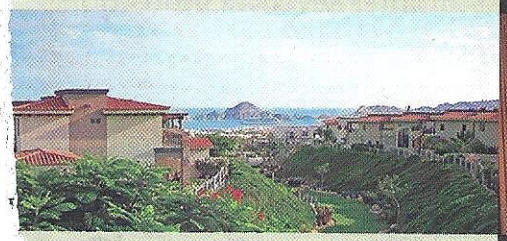

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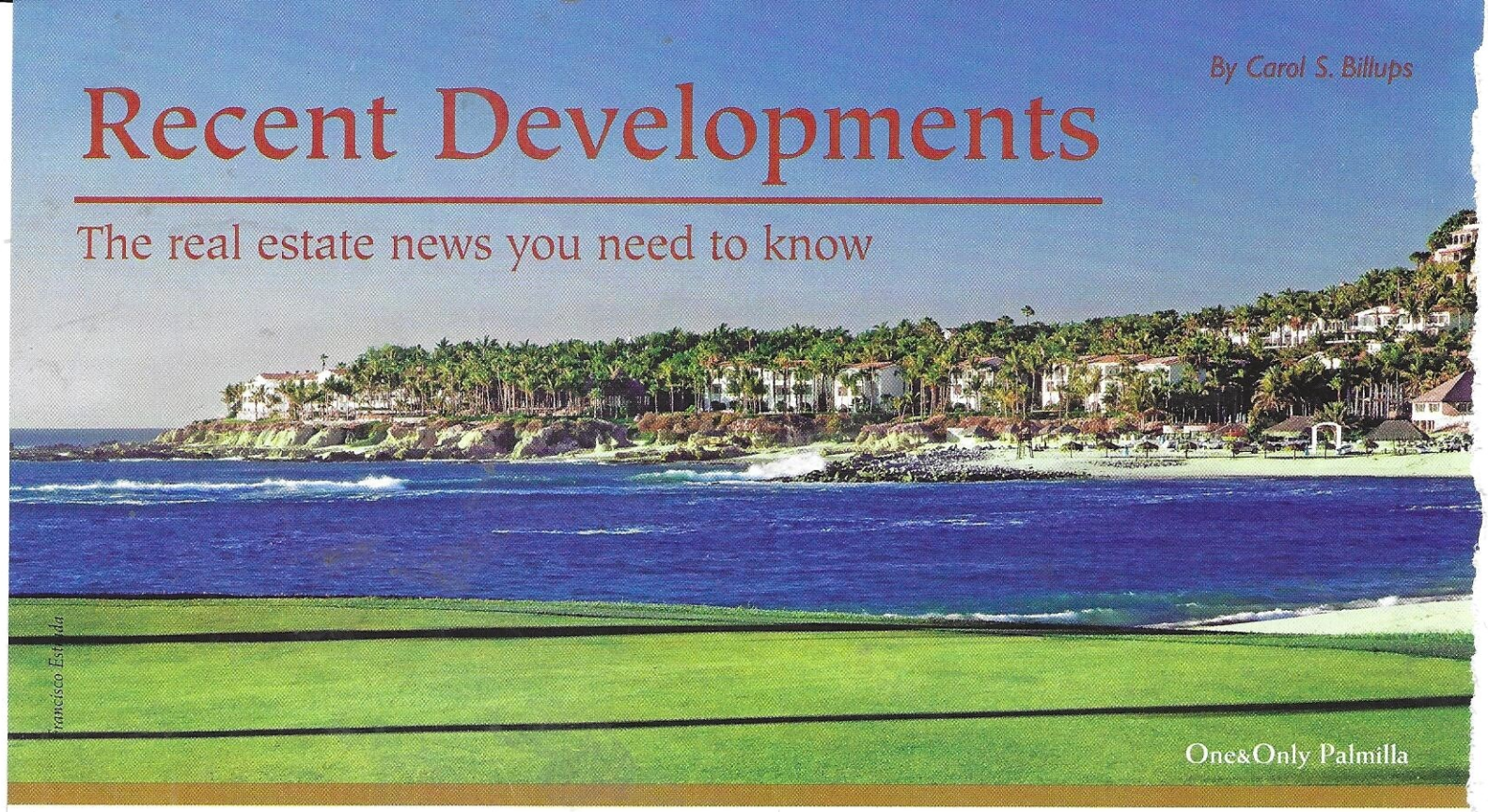
by PORTUS® GROUP

By Carol S. Billups

Recent Developments

The real estate news you need to know

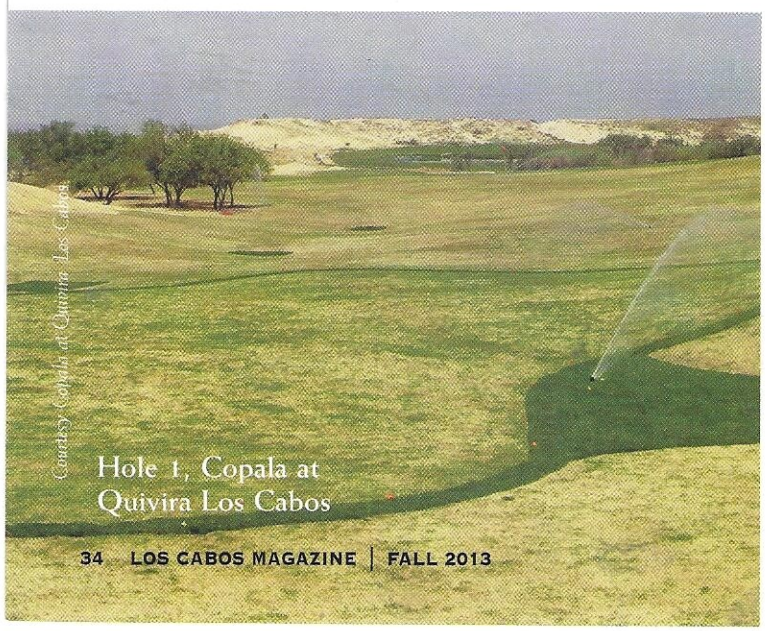


Francisco Estrada

One&Only Palmilla

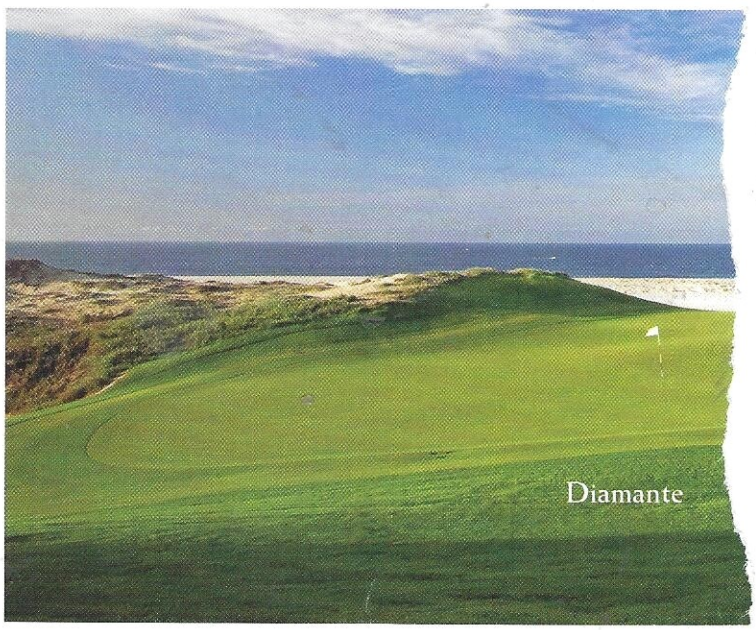
State Real Estate Registration Law Proposed

Los Cabos is home to the most sophisticated real estate protocol in México. That protocol, however, does not extend to the rest of the state of Baja California Sur. A new bill proposed in the last state Assembly would require all members of the real estate community to be registered with the state and to comply with educational requirements yet to be determined. In addition, the law would require that the *notario público* presiding over any change of real estate ownership verify that the agent is registered. The bill is currently in committee, but it has been reviewed extensively by the Los Cabos Board of Realtors, who have deemed that it would add another level of protection for foreign investors.



Courtesy Copala at Quivira Los Cabos

Hole 1, Copala at Quivira Los Cabos



Francisco Estrada

Diamante

Death of the Trust?

In April, the lower house of México's Congress passed a measure that would allow foreigners with permission from the Secretary of Foreign Affairs to own property in México's "restricted zone"—land that falls within 50 kilometers of the ocean and 100 kilometers from an international border—without the need to hold that property in trust, or a *fideicomiso*, with a Mexican bank. This proposed amendment to the 27th Article of the Constitution faces some rather large obstacles. It must be passed in the Senate and then ratified by at least 16 states. In the meantime, the current system of owning in trust remains safe and secure, and it provides foreign buyers all the rights, privileges, and benefits of a Mexican citizen. An Asociación Mexicana de Profesionales Inmobiliarios (AMPI) real estate agent can provide more information on the benefits of owning property in Los Cabos through the fideicomiso system.

Development Progressing at Diamante

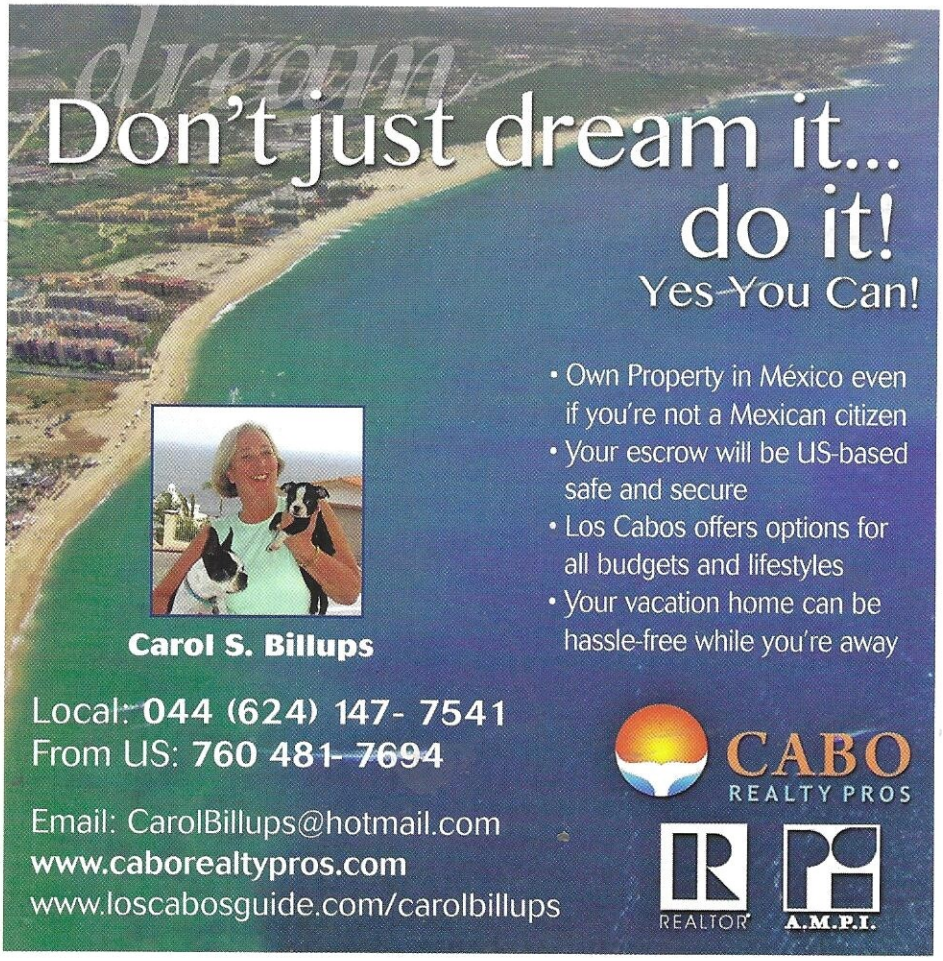
Construction is progressing nicely on both the Crystal Lagoon and the new Tiger Woods golf course at Diamante, one of Los Cabos' most prestigious master-planned development communities. The lagoon, which is due to be completed in August, is an 11-acre swimmable saltwater sports venue. In addition to swimming, residents will have access to kayaking, stand-up paddle, and other sports. The lagoon will be the centerpiece of The Resort, a newly announced property within the community. The 80-acre property will feature condominiums and family-friendly facilities, including a community center. This is in addition to the homes, homesites, golf villas, beachfront estate lots, and Sunset Hill lots currently in inventory.

Work is also under way on the new Tiger Woods–designed course, which will be named El Cardonal. The course will complement the existing Davis Love III Dunes course, named No. 58 in the world by Golf Magazine. In addition to the Davis Love III course, owners at Diamante currently enjoy a full service clubhouse, spa, and fitness center. The fitness center now features the services of well-known local training expert Modu Seye. For more information on Diamante, contact an AMPI-member real estate agent.

New High-end Resort

The Copala at Quivira Los Cabos complex of luxury full-ownership condominiums and homes within the Pueblo Bonito Sunset Beach master-planned community is now entering pre-sales. The Pueblo Bonito Sunset Beach property also includes the time-share resorts Sunset Beach and Monte Cristo as well as the Pacifica resort. Thus the distinction must be made that these are full ownership deeded real estate. The Copala will be adjacent to the Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course, on the 13th hole. The homes and condominiums will, according to the developers, meld luxury living with contemporary Mexican decor and upscale finishes. The residents will have a clubhouse with ocean-view pool and a restaurant featuring organic produce grown on-site. For more information or to visit the site, contact your AMPI-member real estate agent.

Carol S. Billups is broker-owner of Cabo Realty Pros (www.caborealtypros.com) and is *Los Cabos Magazine*'s real estate expert.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11. Budget Car Rental
12. Cabo Adventures
13. Cabo Expeditions
14. Cabo Realty Pros
15. Cabo Sails
16. Cabo Sky Tours
17. Cabo Wabo
18. Captain Tony's
19. Chamuyo Restaurant
20. Columbia Export Service
21. Corazón de Alcachofa
22. Dos Mares Restaurant
23. Eco Cat Tours
24. El Coral Restaurant
25. Fire Department
26. Feinstein (Custom Jewelry)
27. Fly Hooker Sportfishing
28. Hacienda El Coyote
29. Immigration Office
30. Imomo Restaurant
31. Jack's Bar & Grill
32. La Casa Country
33. La Golondrina Restaurant
34. La Pampa Restaurant
35. La Princesa Cruise
36. La Ricazón Restaurant
37. Lorenzillo's Restaurant
38. Los Barriles Restaurant
39. Los Cabos Winery
40. Los Deseos Restaurant
41. Maca Spanish Tasca
42. Madeira Bistro
43. Mail Boxes Cabo
44. Mambo Dance Club
45. Mango Cantina
46. Mango Deck Restaurant
47. Mar Adentro Spa
48. Maria Corona Restaurant
49. Mariscos Mocambo
50. Mi Casa Restaurant
51. Mis Sueños Restaurant
52. National Car Rental
53. Nicksan Restaurant
54. Oyster Bar
55. Pan di Bacco Restaurant
56. Payless Car Rental
57. Penny Lane Cafe
58. Pez Gato/Tropicat Cruise
59. Police (Tourist Department)
60. Presto Restaurant
61. Raffaele Restaurant
62. Romeo y Julieta Restaurant
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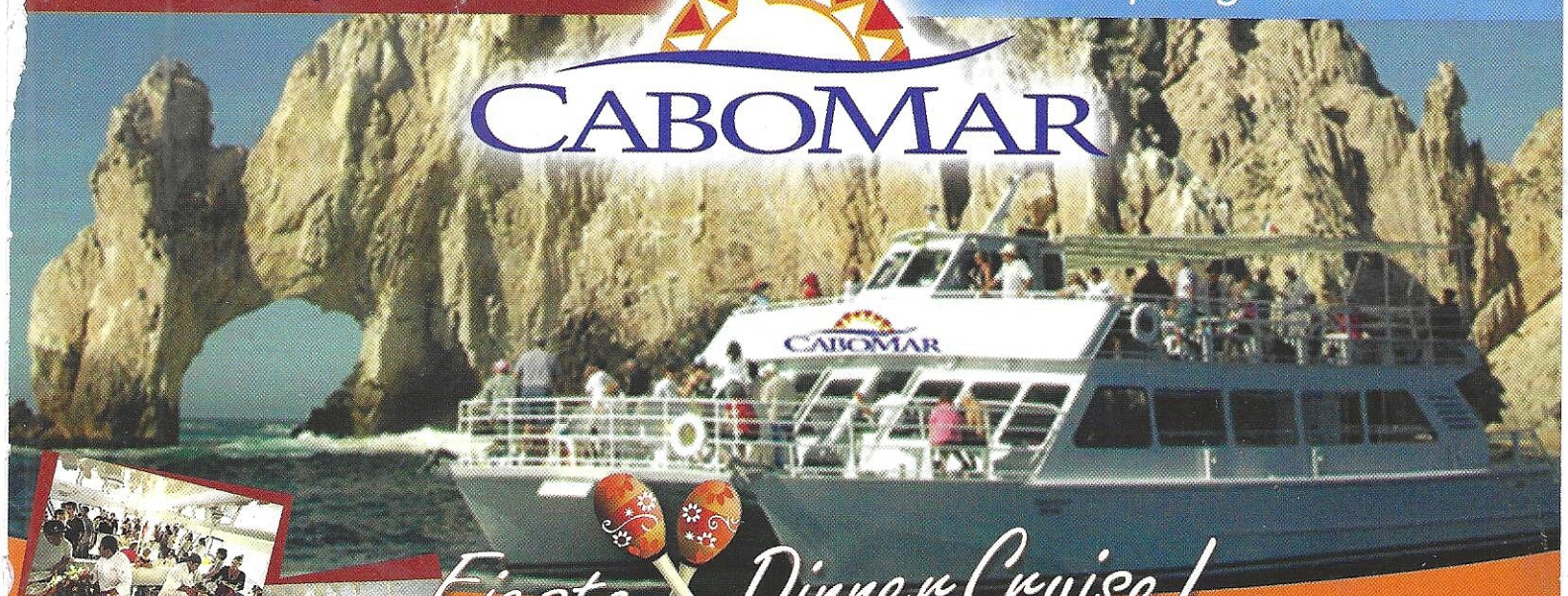

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WET & WILD

Francisco Estrada

Rise early for a morning session of stand-up paddle in Chileno Bay.

Discover adventure on the high seas

By Chris Sands

For everything there is a season, and in Los Cabos summer-fall means water sports. Few places on the planet can match Los Cabos for the sheer diversity of its high-quality water sports and tour options; that's especially true this time of year. Water temperatures are at their warmest, visibility is at its highest, and the fishing is just, plain fantastic.

Love snorkeling, scuba diving, and surfing? This is your time. Conditions are also ideal for kayaking, sailing, and stand-up paddleboarding. And sunset tours of Land's End never really go out of style. As temperatures heat up, don't be afraid to dip a toe in—or dive right into—the region's best water-based activities.

The only real question is where to start?

The Cabo San Lucas Marina is an obvious answer, as this bustling area is home to fishing boats and luxury catamarans, as well as several of the area's top water-based tour companies. **Cabo Adventures** (www.cabo-adventures.com) is a longtime fixture on the marina, and its roster of seagoing excursions is hard to beat. From snorkeling and scuba diving to luxury sailing tours, this company does it right. As famous as Los Cabos is for its fishing, the area also boasts many superb dive sites, from Cabo San Lucas to Cabo Pulmo and all points in between, and Cabo Adventures excels at showing off colorful, fish-rich sites in the vicinity of Lover's Beach and Land's End. Ever been surrounded by schools of exotic fish, watched a majestic procession of manta rays, or been greeted by sea lions? If the answer is no, what are you waiting for? If the answer is yes, what took you so long to get back?

Cabo Adventures also operates **Cabo Dolphins** (www.cabodolphins.com), which perennially ranks as one of Baja California Sur's most popular attractions. It's easy to see why. Not many activities are as family-friendly as dolphin swims, encounters, and trainer-for-a-day programs. Whether you're 6 or 60, you're sure to have an unforgettable experience; few things bring more joy to children than dolphin hugs and kisses. Now Cabo Dolphins has expanded, with dolphinariums in Cabo San Lucas and San José del Cabo, so there's no excuse to not stop by a for a swim with these playful and intelligent creatures.

Francisco Estrada

A kayaking tour takes adventurers around Pelican Rock in Cabo San Lucas.

Cabo Expeditions (www.caboexpeditions.com.mx) is another superb Cabo San Lucas Marina-based tour company, with offerings that include day trips to the spectacularly beautiful Espíritu Santo island (located off the coast of La Paz, the capital of Baja California Sur), as well as opportunities to swim with whale sharks (the world's biggest fish), become a Snuba diver (Snuba is a cross between snorkeling and scuba), and enjoy incredible aquatic experiences courtesy of Sea Trek (underwater helmet diving) technology.

If the idea of being near water without actually getting your feet wet appeals, you might also want to consider a flight with **Cabo Sky Tours** (www.skytourscabo.com). Take in awe-inspiring aerial views of the Cabo San Lucas Bay, Médano Beach, Land's End, and the affluent Pedregal development from a motorized hang glider. Ace pilot Ernesto Magaña has more than 30 years of flying experience, and he hasn't harmed a tourist yet (although he's certainly thrilled quite a few).

What about fishing, you ask? Well, as a matter of fact, Cabo San Lucas was basically built on big game sportfishing. The story goes that after World War II, U.S. pilots flying over the southernmost tip of the Baja Peninsula were blown away by the size and sheer number of fish teeming in the local waters, and their glowing reports helped fuel the area's population as a resort destination.

By the 1950s, fly-in resorts were popping up throughout Baja California Sur, and Hollywood stars were coming down to try their luck with the local marlin population. Los Cabos has a been one of the world's premier fishing destinations ever since. And although the likelihood of hooking a particular type of fish can vary with the seasons, summertime anglers will have ample opportunities to get their hooks into amberjack, black marlin, blue marlin, bonito, dorado, roosterfish, sailfish, striped marlin, wahoo, and yellowfin tuna.

Fly Hooker Sportfishing (www.flyhooker.com) doesn't equate the size of the fishing fleet with the quality of service. Owned and operated by *Los Cabos Magazine*'s very own fishing expert, Captain George Landrum, and his wife, Mary, the company is committed to maximum service with minimum complexity. The Landrums have close to two decades of experience fishing the local waters aboard their 31-foot Bertram, and they offer excellent, detail-oriented service and expert fish-finding for exclusive groups of up to six anglers.

Of the other high-quality charter companies in the area, **Picante Bluewater Sportfishing** (www.picantesportfishing.com) and **Silverados Sportfishing** (www.silveradosportfishing.com) certainly stand out, not only for their fish-finding prowess, but for their tremendous record of success in local fishing tournaments. Like Picante, whose fleet of vessels ranges from the 24-foot Picantito the the 68-foot custom yacht Pegasus, Silverados' charter boat fleet is large and varied enough to satisfy any angler's budget.

Looking for someone to cook up your catch of the day? Try **Solomon's Landing** (www.solomonslandingrestaurant.com), a longtime Cabo San Lucas Marina favorite known for its outstanding seafood menu. The chef will be happy to cook up your catch any way you like it, and the servers won't object if you wash it down with some ice-cold Mexican beer. Or, if you need a little ballast before braving the high seas, stop by for breakfast and the best waffles in México; they're stuffed with warm apple compote and hot blueberry sauce, then topped with real whipped cream.

Have you waited 30 minutes after eating your waffles? OK, back in the water ...

As you might imagine, the Cabo San Lucas Bay is a busy place. During the summer months, the bay is awash in nau-

Francisco Estrada

RRRRRR you ready for some pirate-themed fun on the Cabo San Lucas Bay? Buccaneer Queen enchants pirates of all ages.

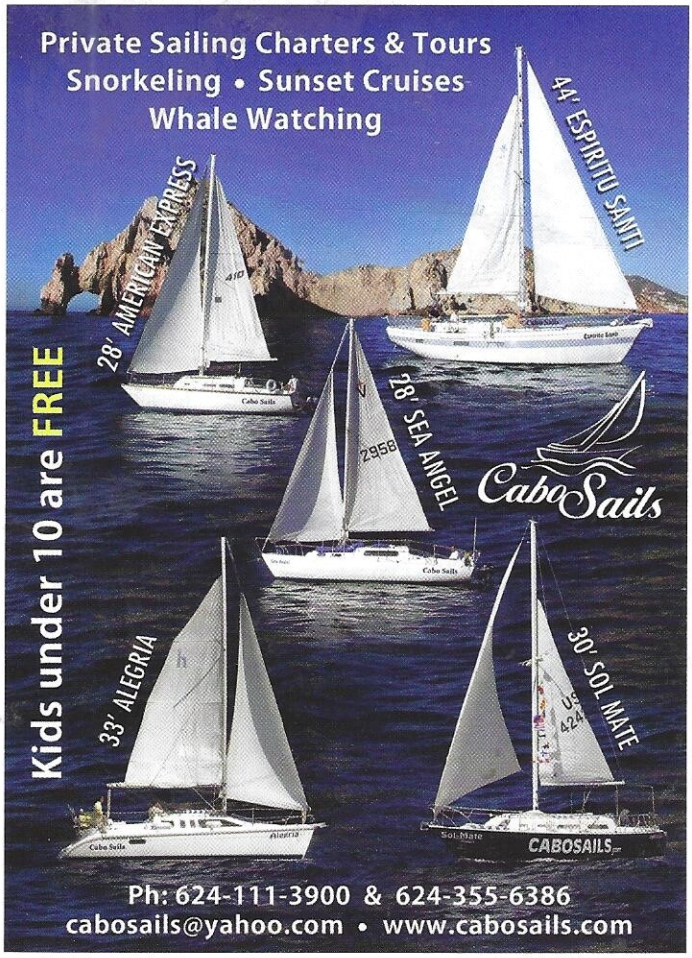
tical activity: Small *pangas* (skiffs) transport people out to Lover's Beach, wave runners dart between dive boats that have dropped anchor, kayakers paddle along Médano Beach, and fishing boats power out in search of big catches.

Then there is the calm in the middle of this maritime hive, the serene and stately sailboats. Los Cabos has a wonderful selection of sleek, sexy sailboats and luxury catamaran tours, but for brevity's sake, we'll stick to the most singular, impressive, and consistently satisfying tours.

First up, the romance and of adventure of **Cabo Sails** (www.cabosails.com). Cabo San Lucas is blessed with exceptionally good sailing winds outside the protected bay, and for salty sailor types or those who want to learn to sail during their vacation, Cabo Sails is a great choice. Sailboats

Explore what lies beneath with Cabo Expeditions.

range from 30 to 42 feet in length and are able to accommodate up to 20 guests for snorkel and sunset tours, as well as private and overnight charters customized to the specific needs of guests. The sunset tours are as romantic as you can imagine, with champagne-aided sunsets and the feel of the deck shifting beneath your feet as you run before the wind.



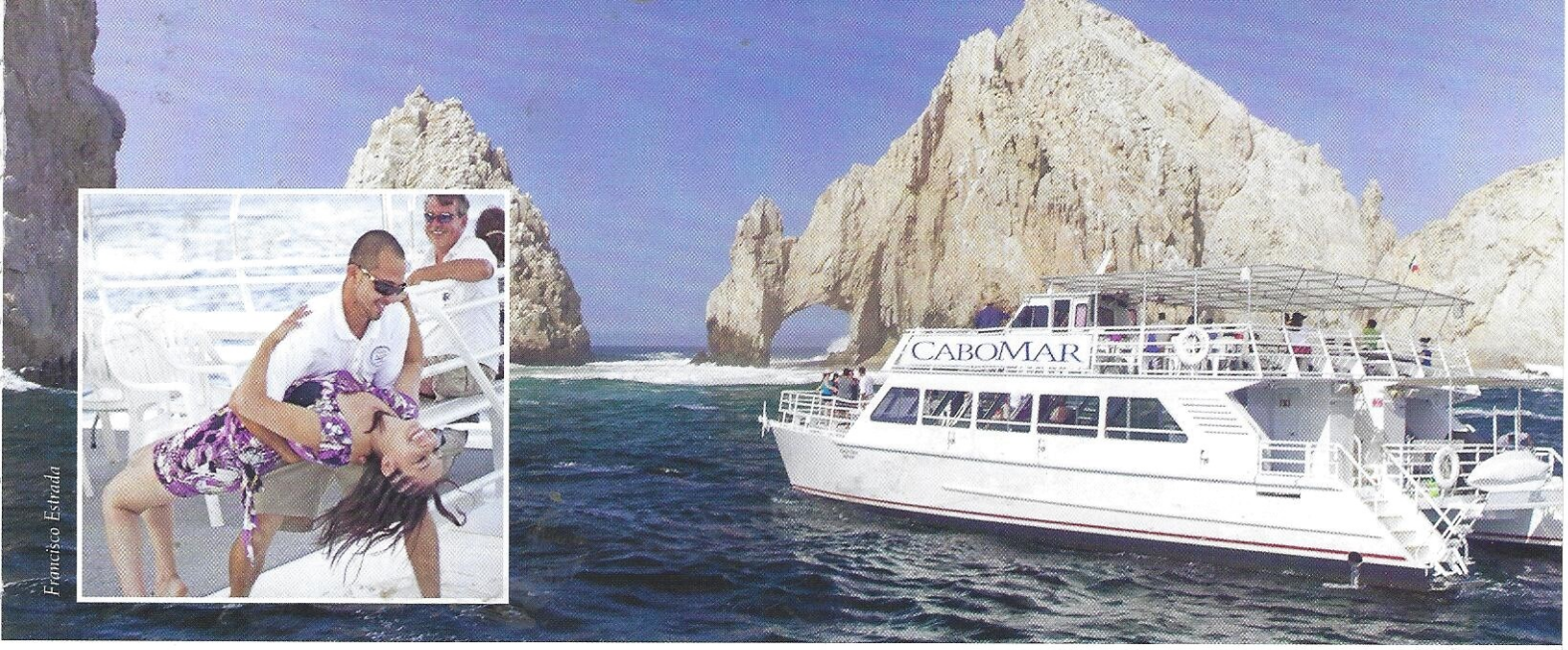
Mariachis are optional, but highly recommended. Special sails are offered for cruise ship passengers with limited time in our seaside paradise.

Lovers of luxury catamarans and multibay snorkel and kayak tours, meanwhile, should definitely seek out the elegant, French-built **EcoCat** (www.caboecotours.com), which offers all the double-hulled stability and smooth sailing characteristic of the larger cats, with surprisingly affordable and budget-friendly pricing. EcoCat features a large salon-style air-conditioned cabin, where you can beat the heat as you enjoy one of its many tours. Outing options include sunset and VIP dinner cruises, as well as combination snorkel-kayak-zodiac trips. Splash and paddle around beautiful locations like Pelican and Seal Rocks in Cabo San Lucas Bay or sign up for a two- or three-bay option, which includes stops at Chileno and Santa María bays.

Party boat and booze cruise aficionados may want to sign up for the **Sunrider 100** (www.sunridertours.com). The 100-foot catamaran carries up to 250 guests for snorkel lunch and sunset dinner cruises, so you feel as if you're aboard the world's largest floating nightclub, with plenty of drinks, dance music and all-you-can-eat treats from the Mexican-themed buffet. Something a little more intimate? Try the Sun Rider or the Fun Rider. The former holds up to 60 guests, the latter up to 18 for family-and-friends cruises.

Catamaran enthusiasts would also be impressed with the trinity of tours offered by **Pez Gato** (www.pezgato.com), **Tropicat** (www.tropicatcabo.com), and **Cabo Mar** (www.cabo-mar.com). Pez Gato is the early bird of the group, with snorkel trips to Bahia Santa María as well as hugely popular party cruises with drinking, dancing and games. Its sister cat Tropicat, on the other hand, is known for its more relaxed jazz and wine sunset cruises. I don't know abou you, but sipping some pinot noir, nibbling on hors d'oeuvres, and feeling a gentle mist of salt spray sounds pretty good right about now. Cabo Mar is the designated dinner cat, boasting a fiesta-themed dinner cruise that includes dancing and an all-you-can-eat Mexican buffet. In addition to the tasty eats, photo opportunities abound on this tour, with scenic views as the sun descends into the Pacific Ocean beyond Land's End, the sky painted with vivid pink and purple brushstrokes. Too poetic? Get back to me after you have taken this tour.

La Princesa (www.laprincesacharters.com) has two superb catamarans as well as a trimaran to choose from, and tour options include snorkel trips, sunset booze cruises, and the occasional theme night with masquerades or salsa dancing. One of the best things about sailing with La Princesa is the later start time. Since they don't throw off the mooring lines until noon, spend the morning hours reading the latest copy of



Francisco Estrada

Take the party to the water with Cabo Mar, which offers a festive dinner fiesta cruise.

Los Cabos Magazine before sailing up the coast to Bahia Santa María. You're on your own at that point, but I suggest snorkeling, swimming, and relaxing with cocktails and excellent Mexican dishes like *mole*, fajitas,and *flautas*.

Kids aren't the only ones who love pirates, which may explain the enduring popularity of the **Buccaneer Queen** (www.buccaneerloscabos.com). This scurvy black flag–flying vessel combines all the peg-legged, parrot squawking, X marks the spot buried treasure allure you'd expect in a pirate-themed adventure, with all the leisurely amenities you'd expect from a high-end pleasure boating cruise. All tours boast spectacular views, a complimentary meal, and an open bar. Other highlights include scenic snorkeling in Chileno Bay, and enough sword fights and treasure hunts to delight guests of all age groups. If you're lucky, you won't have to walk the plank, and you won't leave the boat wearing an eye patch.

Last, but certainly not least, is **Caborey** (www.caborey.com). This is the king of Cabo dinner cruises, and the luxurious 144-foot triple-decker catamaran boasts six delicious entrée choices, with dessert accompanied by an incredible Las Vegas-style floor show showcasing the traditional music and folk dances of Latin America. It's really hard to resist lobster, filet mignon, and tango dancing, and aboard Caborey you don't have to. In addition to the dinner cruises, Caborey also offers afternoon snorkel tours to Chileno Bay, and Margarita Cocktail Cruises, which include live music and lovely sunset views of Lover's Beach and the arch at Land's End.

As they like to say at Cabo Sails, "sailing is not just another boat ride, it's a lifestyle." The same logic applies to adventures in Los Cabos. These aren't just water-based activities, they're an integral part of the Baja California Sur vacation experience. Anchors aweigh!

My Favorite Weekend

By Wendy Atkinson

Francisco Estrada

Los Cabos has a reputation. The sister cities at the southernmost tip of the Baja Peninsula are famous for sun, sand, surf, and tequila as well as the preternaturally good-looking coeds who descend on their beaches each spring. Can we go ahead and declare Los Cabos party central? Yes. And no. Sure, you can explore your wild side in Cabo San Lucas. But you can also retreat to San José del Cabo, a beachside oasis with decidedly colonial charm. See what else it has to offer in our quick guide.

San José del Cabo

Discover this beachside oasis with colonial charm

A Land Before Time

Our guide may be short, but San José del Cabo—known as simply San José among locals—has a long, rich history. Forty thousand years ago, the San José region was known as Añuiti ("place full of reeds") and populated by the Pericue Indians, who were very tall and strong and in possession of advanced maritime technology. The Pericues lived on the land, feasted from the oceans, and left later generations tales of their lives through mysterious paintings on cave walls. Through the years, the land now known as San José del Cabo was fought over and lost, rebuilt and destroyed, cherished or sold by many peoples: the English, the Spanish, the Pericues, and even pirates.

Spanish galleons made their way to San José del Cabo in the 17th and 18th centuries. They would stop, it's said, to replenish their water supplies in the Río San José during their long voyages to Asia. The town's mission was founded in 1730.

Now San José is the municipal seat for Los Cabos and home to amazing restaurants, magnificent hotels, quaint shops, beautiful architecture, warm people, and safe streets.

The Great Outdoors

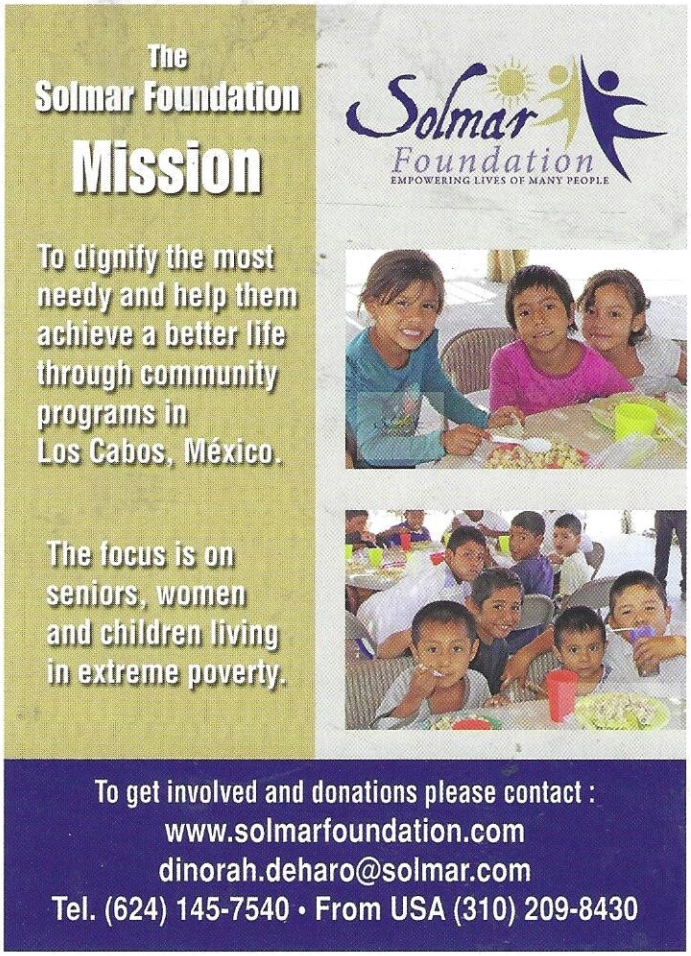
It's but a short walk from historic downtown to a protected estuary, where freshwater from the Sierra de la Laguna Mountains mingles with saltwater from the Sea of Cortés.

Francisco Estrada

San José del Cabo is the municipal seat of Los Cabos. Pictured: El palacio municipal *in downtown San José.*

Walk or bike the paved path that runs along a portion of this lush, green safe haven and enjoy the many exotic plants and animals. This estuary is home to more than 100 species of birds, fish, turtles, and other marine animals.

Kick up your tour a notch by taking to horseback. **Camino Aventura Activities** (624-105-8413, www.caminoaventura.mx), located at the end of Hotel Beach, has about 26 horses, which are kept in corrals under the shade of trees that grow thick in this oasis. This spring, I enjoyed a romantic, late afternoon beach ride mounted on a steed named Tequila. The beach ride takes about an hour, and it is a shorter tour than the *estero* tour. Whether you choose the estero or the beach, there's nothing quite like the view of San José from horseback.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Replenish

After all the outdoor fun, good food is a must. San José has a variety of exceptional dining establishments; there's one to satisfy everyone's palate. There are many quaint restaurants and taco stands that offer the traditional flavors of México and will make your taste buds sing. They're perfect for a quick lunch or late-night snack.

For a refreshing no-guilt snack, try **Yogurlicious** (it's located across from Burger King on your way to the international airport, www.yogurliciousmx.com). As the name would suggest, the brand-new shop offers delicious frozen yogurt. There are 40 flavors and 46 toppings at the self-serve spot. The only limitation is your imagination.

San José del Cabo restaurants range from the übercasual to worthy of a king. Should you be in need of the royal treatment, make a beeline to **Jazmin's Restaurant** (624-142-1760, www.loscabosguide.com/jazminsrestaurant). Walking through its doors is like taking a step back in history. The decor offers a colorful celebration of Pancho Villa and the heroes of the Mexican Revolution. The canvas-covered patio provides shade, and you can head inside for air-conditioning on hot days. Inside, the rustic red brick walls are a veritable museum of México's history, and the tables and chairs are painted in eye-catching enamel colors. The food is remarkable, and the fresh-squeezed limeade with mineral water (*"limonada con agua*

mineral" in Spanish) is a refreshing and zesty, sweet and sassy pick-me-up. Quaff your lemonade during a late-afternoon lunch or return come evening for a meal that starts with a scallop appetizer and is followed by a hearty chile relleno.

The culinary team at **Mi Casa Restaurant** (624-146-9263, www.micasarestaurant.com.mx) consistently prepares out-of-this-world Mexican classics in a paradisiacal setting. The courtyard is downright lovely, and guests at Mi Casa can expect a feast for their tastebuds as well as their eyes. The artwork that adorns Mi Casa's walls—like the cuisine—has been handpicked from every region of México to represent the diversity and beauty of this land and its people. Here, the *chile en nogada* is teeming not only with flavor but also with tradition. The ribs are marinated in tamarind sauce and fire roasted so that they melt in the mouth. Top off the perfect meal with homemade mango ice cream infused with tequila; now that's México!

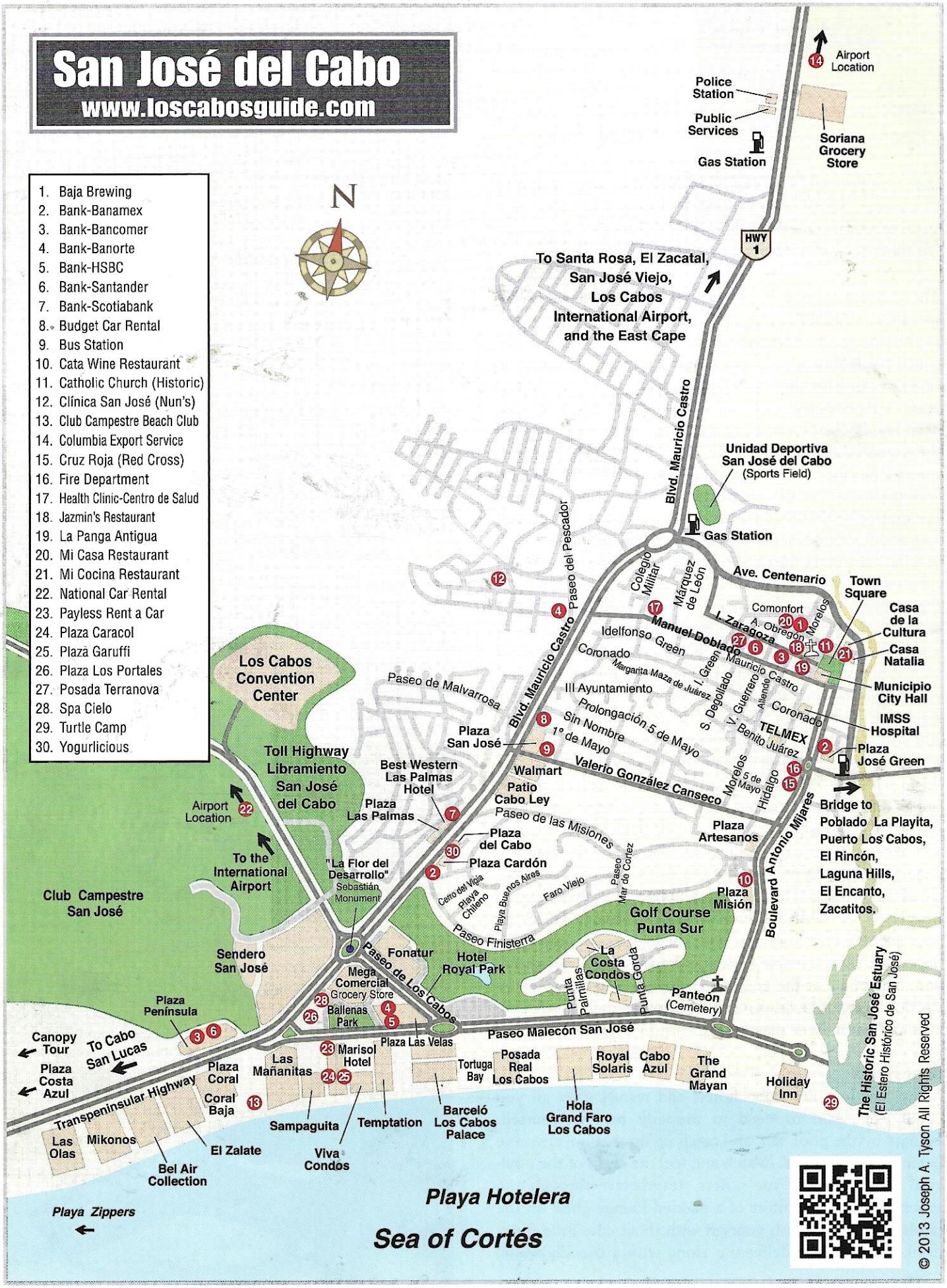
If romance is what you're after, ask your concierge to make a reservation at **Cata Wine Restaurant** (624-142-0868, www.catawinecabo.com). The name suggests a focus on vinos—and yes, the wine list is extensive and expertly curated—but on my night here I was blown away by the menu, ambience, and service. The eclectic decor, intimate seating, and soft lighting set a romantic mood, while the attentive service allows you to get pleasantly lost in the experience. Begin with the casino clam appetizers and spinach rotolis, home dough that is rolled with spinach, ham, and three cheeses then brushed with garlic, and baked to perfection. The entrées are equally impressive. The penne de salmon is exquisite: The salmon is tender and sweet in a smoked tomato whiskey sauce. The Don Cata entrée of seafood-stuffed peppers is rich with traditional Mexican flavors. Finish off your evening on a high note with the famous Mexican flaming coffee. The veritable tableside dinner show is delightful, and, best of all, at the end of the show, guests get to enjoy the delicious coffee drink. Cata Wine offers such an amazing evening that it alone may inspire return visits to Los Cabos.

Just Relax

Many San José del Cabo hotels and resorts offer all you could ever want or need to properly pamper yourself. Lounge by the pool, tan, and catch up on that novel you've been meaning to read. Watch and feel the crash of the powerful waves, perfect for surfers, reverberate through the ground from the comfort of a padded lounge chair on the poolside patio. Refresh yourself with those cute little fruity drinks servers keep delivering along with a friendly smile.

A sculpture by Leonora Carrington at Puerto Los Cabos.

Francisco Estrada


San José del Cabo
www.loscabosguide.com
1. Baja Brewing
2. Bank-Banamex
3. Bank-Bancomer
4. Bank-Banorte
5. Bank-HSBC
6. Bank-Santander
7. Bank-Scotiabank
8. Budget Car Rental
9. Bus Station
10. Cata Wine Restaurant
11. Catholic Church (Historic)
12. Clínica San José (Nun's)
13. Club Campestre Beach Club
14. Columbia Export Service
15. Cruz Roja (Red Cross)
16. Fire Department
17. Health Clinic-Centro de Salud
18. Jazmin's Restaurant
19. La Panga Antigua
20. Mi Casa Restaurant
21. Mi Cocina Restaurant
22. National Car Rental
23. Payless Rent a Car
24. Plaza Caracol
25. Plaza Garuffi
26. Plaza Los Portales
27. Posada Terranova
28. Spa Cielo
29. Turtle Camp
30. Yogurlicious
N
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V. Benito Juárez
Plaza José Green
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Best Western Las Palmas Hotel
Walmart
Patio Cabo Ley
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Morelos
5 de Mayo
Hidalgo
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Playa Chileno
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Paseo Mar de Cortez
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Mega Comercial Grocery Store
Panteón (Cemetery)
Plaza Península
Ballenas Park
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Plaza Las Velas
Paseo Malecón San José
Canopy Tour
To Cabo San Lucas
Plaza Costa Azul
Marisol Hotel
Las Mañanitas
Plaza Coral
Coral Baja
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Tortuga Bay
Posada Real Los Cabos
Royal Solaris
Cabo Azul
The Grand Mayan
Holiday Inn
The Historic San José Estuary
(El Estero Histórico de San José)
Las Olas
Mikonos
El Zalate
Bel Air Collection
Sampaguita
Viva Condos
Temptation
Barceló Los Cabos Palace
Hola Grand Faro Los Cabos
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Playa Hotelera
Sea of Cortés
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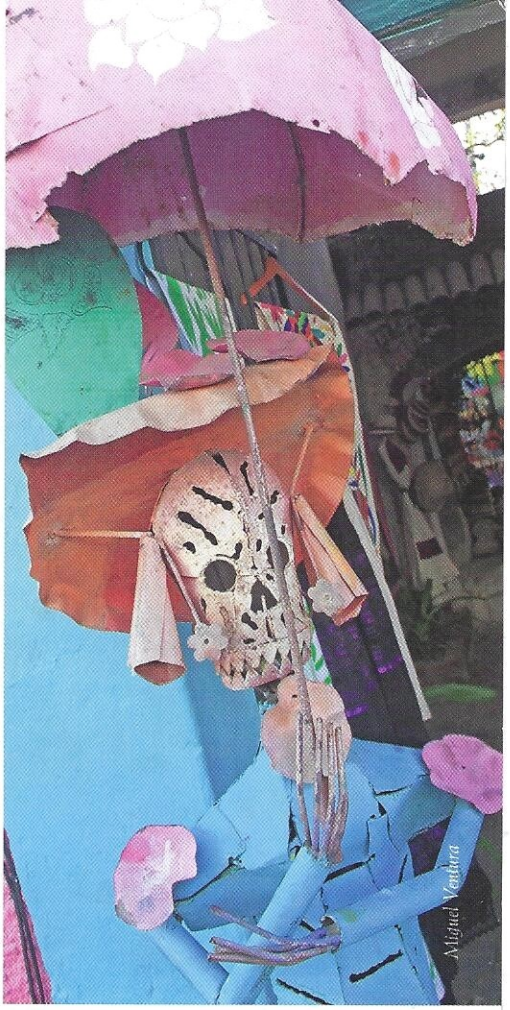
Miguel Ventura

Picturesque downtown San José del Cabo was made for strolling.



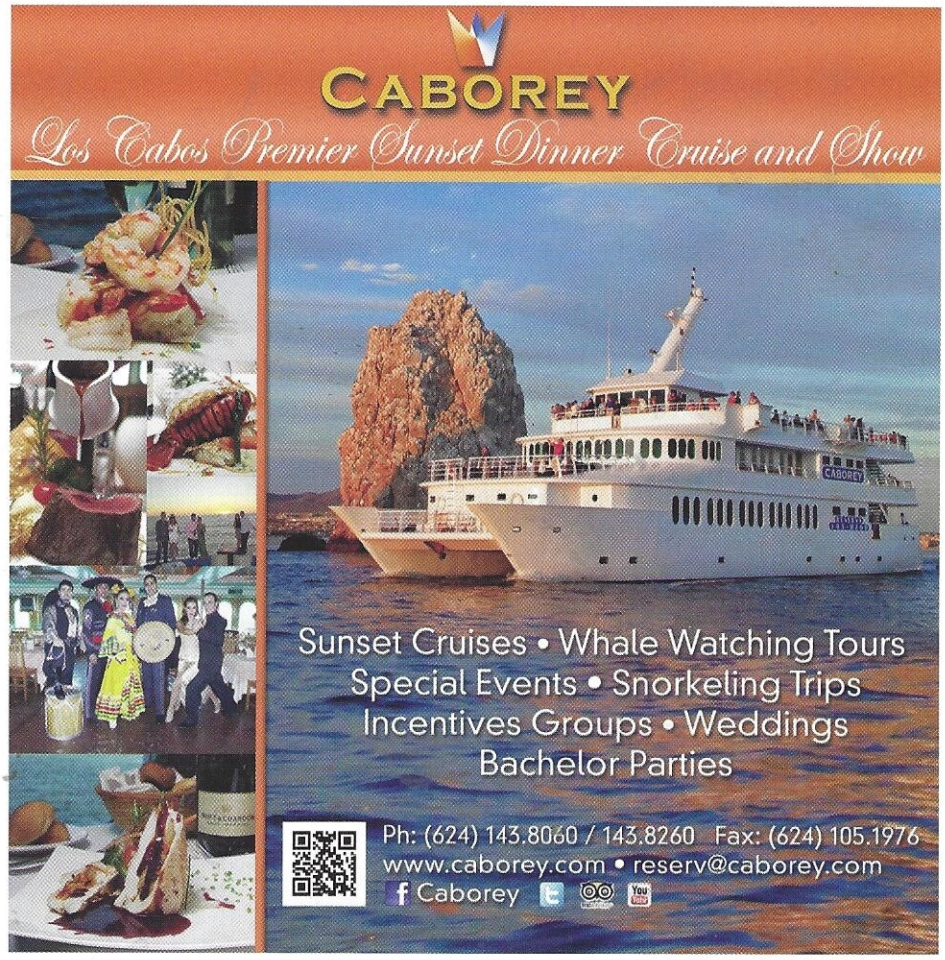
Miguel Ventura

Dine poolside on succulent shrimp cocktails and fresh local fruits. Rest, relax, and leave the worrying to when you get back home. To see a list of area resorts, go to www.loscabosguide.com/hotels/sanjose.htm.

Massage enthusiasts: No trip to Los Cabos is complete without a visit to **Spa Cielo** (www.spa-cielo.com), which offers a wide range of services, with everything from a simple oxygen and vitamin C facial to advanced technology ultrasound liposuction. You may return home not only feeling like a new person, but looking like one, too. But we must add that our favorite service here is a no-fuss massage that leaves you feeling invigorated.

San José To-Go

The historic town square in San José del Cabo boasts colonial-style buildings and several amazing galleries. It should also be noted, though, that this is a wonderful spot to stock up on mementos. Shops of every sort abound. Here venders tout their wares from a variety of sources and are geared toward a variety of tastes. For a girl who loves semi-precious gems and silver, I was in heaven. Don't miss boutiques selling Mexican fire opals. The gemstones by this name come mainly from the state of Querétaro in mainland México. These famous opals generally occur in warm tones such as red, orange and yellow hews and sometimes have bright green flashes of color when they are held to the light just right. Making a choice such as fine jewelry for a souvenir allows for a timeless memento of a lovely and peaceful trip to San José del Cabo that can be cherished and admired for many years to come. ▩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BEACH BLANKET BINGO

Get to know Los Cabos *playas* with our playful guide

By Wendy Atkinson
Images by Francisco Estrada

There is no shortage of sun, sand, and surf in Los Cabos. And while we maintain that you can't have too much of a good thing, we understand the myriad beaches can seem overwhelming to first-time visitors. Here we've devised a beach guide that plays off that favorite childhood game: B-I-N-G-O.

Playa del Amor (Lover's Beach)

Best known for: This must-visit beach is located on the Sea of Cortés side of the southernmost tip of the Baja Peninsula; it's famous for the iconic arch that marks Land's End.

Insider tip: Take whatever you may need with you; there are no amenities.

Not: If you're in the mood to party, this beach may not be the beach for you.

Getting there: Hire a water taxi or a glass-bottom boat from the Cabo San Lucas Marina or Médano Beach, where you could also rent a kayak or wave runner.

Offers: There are few things Playa del Amor doesn't offer you. Take advantage of the wonderful snorkeling conditions, where you can see Jacques Cousteau's sand falls discovery for yourself.

Playa del Divorcio (Divorce Beach)

Best known for: Playa del Divorcio is but a short walk from Lover's Beach, but its turbulent Pacific Ocean waters provide a more dramatic backdrop. Read a book while you listen to the waves crashing.

Insider tip: There are no services here, either, so bring whatever you anticipate needing.

Not: This is not the beach for swimming.

Getting there: Stroll on over from Lover's Beach.

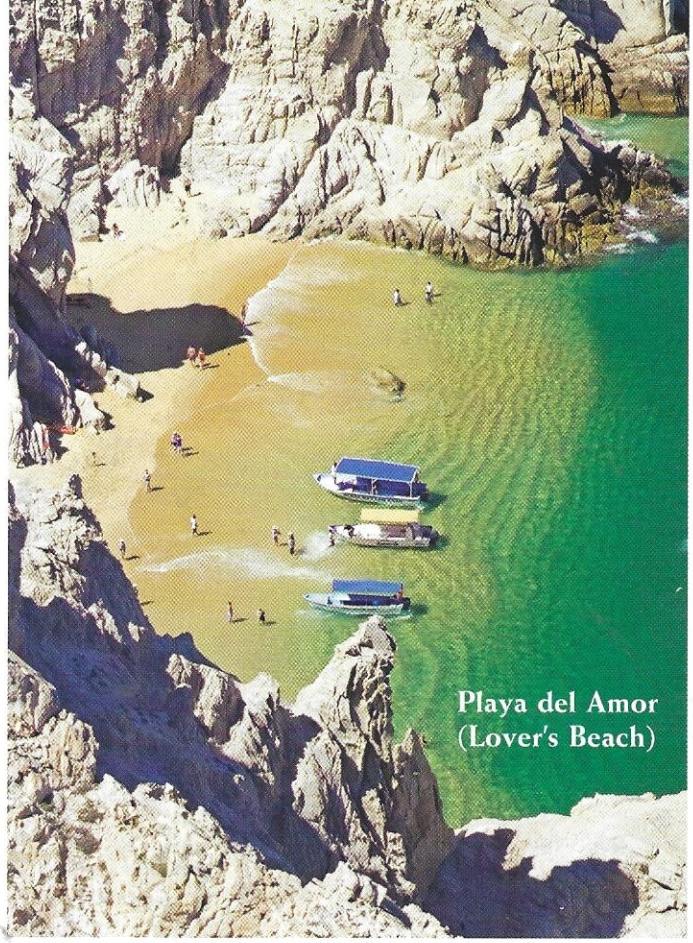
Offers: Here you'll find a more laid-back sunbather's haven.

Playa El Médano (Médano Beach)

Best known for: Médano Beach is party central come spring break, and the place to go for water activities rentals all year.

Insider tip: Don't miss Mango Deck's risqué competitions. Amazing prizes go to the winners of these, so stop on in.

Not: Médano is not the place for those looking for a quiet afternoon with a good book.



Playa del Amor (Lover's Beach)

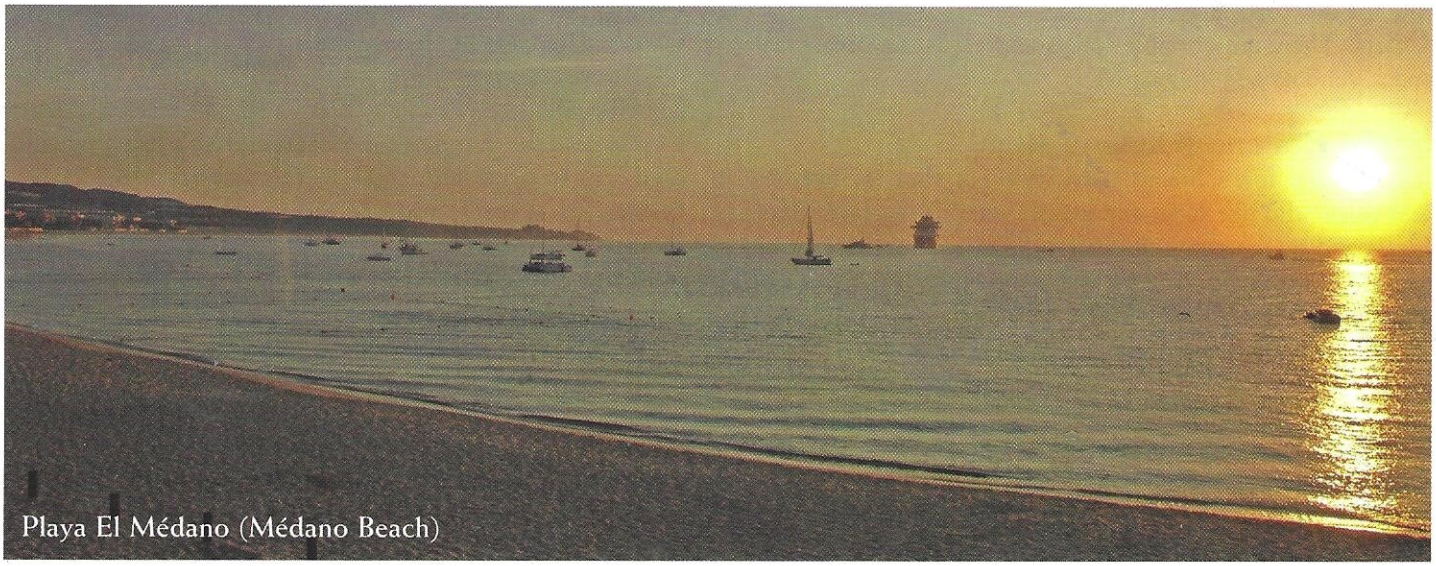
Getting there: This centrally located beach can be accessed from several points in downtown Cabo San Lucas.

Offers: Here you'll find certified beach lifeguards, portable toilets (bring paper), souvenir vendors, watercraft rentals, horseback riding, massage services, food and drink vendors, restaurants, fine dining, hotels, parking, and even jetpacks.

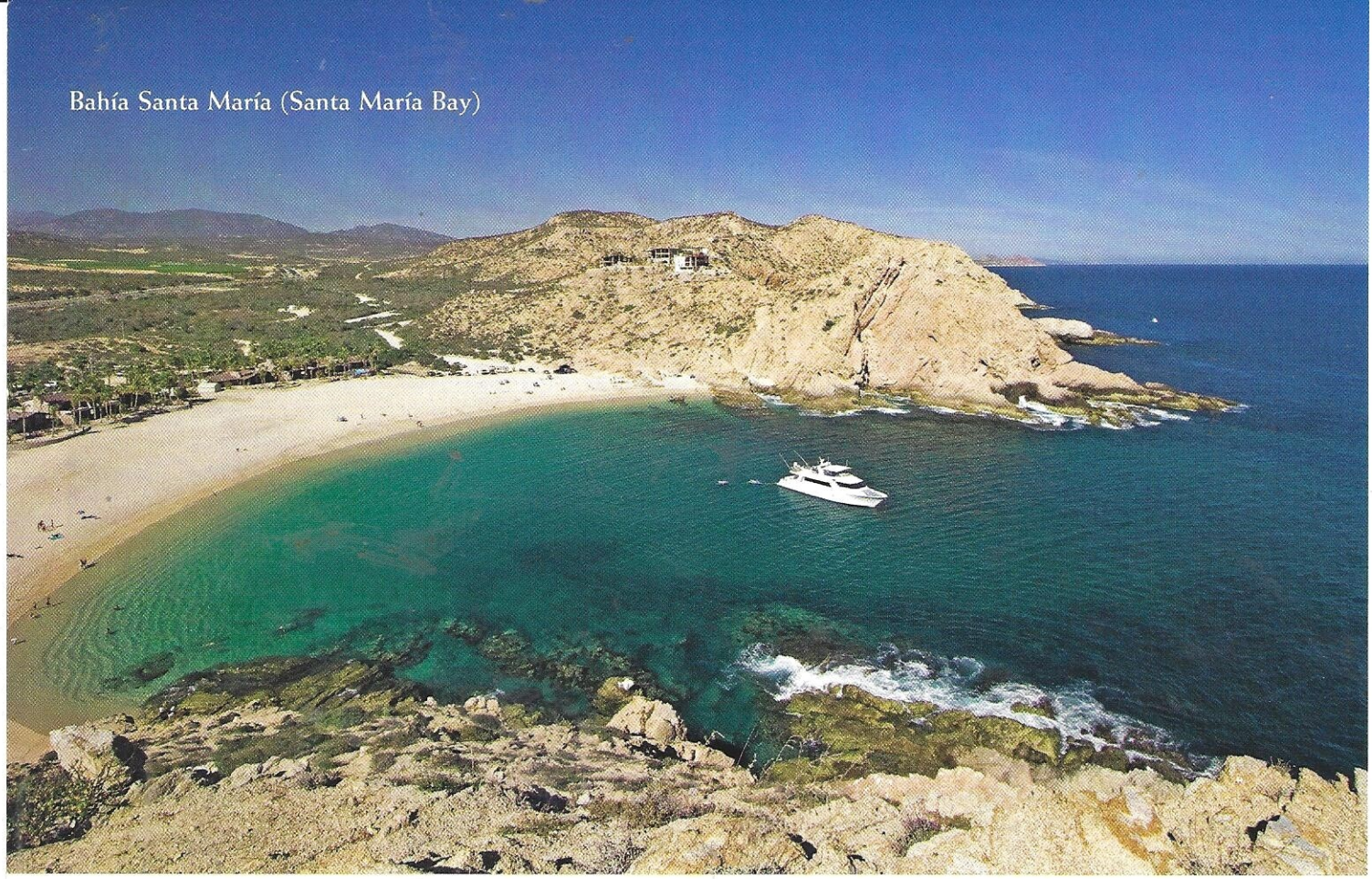
Playa Las Viudas (Widow's Beach)

Best known for: Make your way to Playa Las Viudas for romantic midnight strolls or casual explorations of the tide pools.

Insider tip: Recent construction in the area requires caution while driving on the access road.



Playa El Médano (Médano Beach)



Bahía Santa María (Santa María Bay)

Not: Swimming is not a good idea here; the water is too rough.
Getting there: Exit the Tourist Corridor at km 11.5 and follow the dirt road toward the beach.
Offers: There are portable toilets.

Bahía Santa María (Santa María Bay)

Best known for: This dog-friendly beach is an awesome spot for snorkeling and sunbathing.
Insider tip: There's a path to the top of a hill that provides a lovely view of the water.
Not: Don't expect a party atmosphere here.
Getting there: Exit the Tourist Corridor at km 12 and follow the dirt road. Stay to the left.
Offers: There are portable toilets as well as the occasional snack vendors and lifeguards.

Bahia Chileno (Chileno Bay)

Best known for: Chileno is an excellent spot for families and those who like to sit and people watch. It's a favorite of locals and in-the-know tourists in large part because of its versatility: Chileno is great for snorkeling, sunning, and snapping photos. During whale season, it's not uncommon to spot humpbacks nearby.
Insider tip: There are actually several access points to the beach here. On the way to the main beach, just before the boardwalk, an access road runs to the east and west. Take this road uphill, and there are two more sweet little beaches.
Not: Chileno doesn't have the party vibe of Médano, but you're unlikely to find total seclusion, either.
Getting there: Look for the signs at about km 14 along the Tourist Corridor. Take the paved road to the parking lot below.
Offers: There's handicapped access, including a boardwalk to several shade *palapas*, bathrooms, showers, numerous additional palapa umbrellas, and two lifeguard stands.

Playa Palmilla (Palmilla Beach)

Best known for: Check out the coral-covered rocks and fishermen selling fresh catches around brunch time.
Insider tip: Charter a *panga* (skiff) for the day to do some fishing.
Not: This perennial locals' favorite is not to be missed.
Getting there: Exit the Tourist Corridor at km 27 and turn left.
Offers: There are limited amenities.

La Playita (Little Beach at Puerto Los Cabos)

Best known for: Families can feel comfortable bringing children here to swim, surf, and host celebrations.
Insider tip: A recent upgrade introduced modernized restrooms and showers.
Not: The all-purpose beach is not where you'd want to plan a romantic rendezvous.
Getting there: Take the East Cape road from Mijares Boulevard in central San José (opposite the Bomberos and Telmex building) and follow the signs to Puerto Los Cabos marina about two miles away.
Offers: A play structure and an inner swimming bay are just perfect for kids; there's also ample parking and palapas for shade.

Playa los Arbolitos (Little Trees Beach)

In Cabo Pulmo National Park

Best known for: There are some amazing rock formations, little caves, amazing snorkeling and insane photo opportunities.

Insider tip: Take the trail up the rocks on the western border of the parking lot for just under a mile.

Not: The beach area is accessible for most visitors. However, the trail requires considerable mobility and is not for the faint of heart.

Getting there: Follow signs toward Cabo Pulmo, past La Ribera and Cabo Pulmo to a sign marked Los Arbolitos, about hour from La Ribera. Follow the road for about a mile to the parking lot.

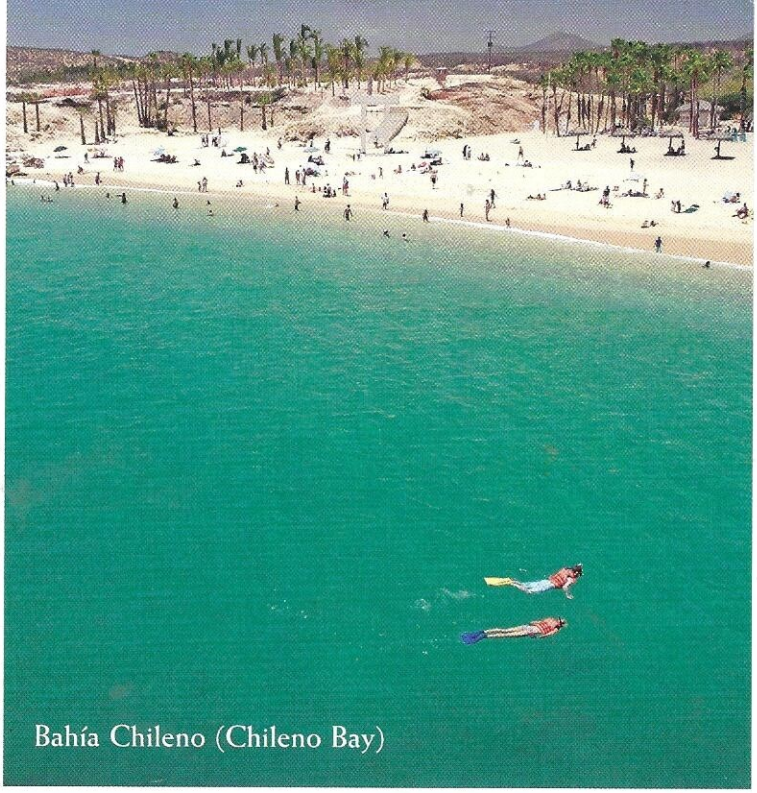
Offers: There's great parking and portable toilets. Bring everything you need, this is a remote location.

Bahia Los Frailes (Friars Bay)

Best known for: Camp, roast s'mores, and enjoy sunrises, sunsets, stargazing, and snorkeling.

Insider tip: There are camping spots right on the beach, don't settle for the spots without checking the beachfront spots' availability.

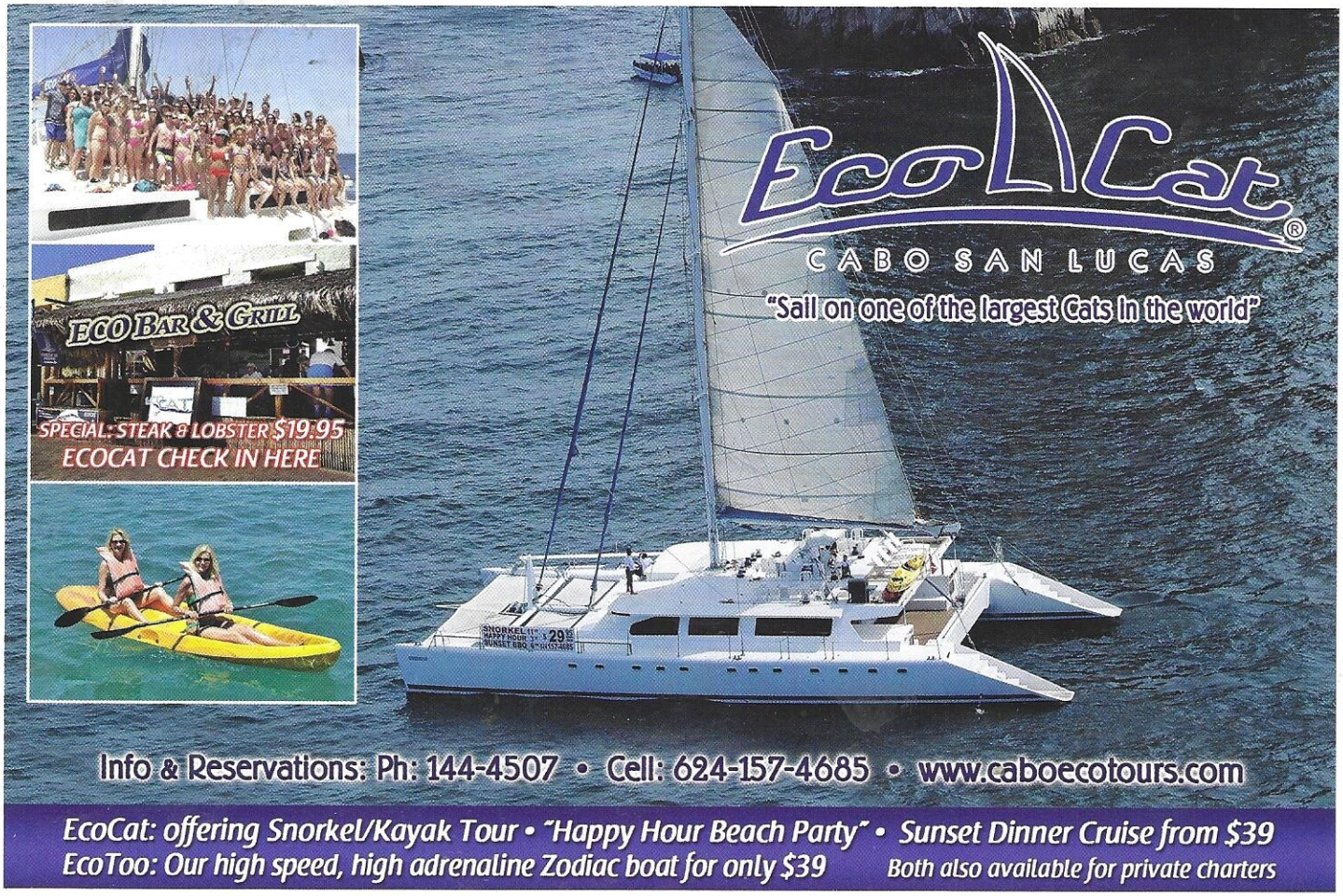
Not: This pet-friendly beach is not fancy, but it is fabulous.



Bahía Chileno (Chileno Bay)

Getting there: Follow directions toward Cabo Pulmo, continuing beyond Cabo Pulmo and Los Arbolitos to Bahia Los Frailes.

Offers: There are portable toilets and palapas. But bring everything you need, including water. This is a remote location.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The Directory

Choose your own adventure with this guide to Los Cabos activities

Whether your idea of fun under the Baja sun runs to wine tasting or world-class golfing, salsa dancing or big-game sportfishing, Los Cabos has an activities company that's sure to meet your needs. Here are a few of our favorites, listed by category.—Chris Sands

Francisco Estrada

Adventure Parks

Cabo Adventures: The popular activities outfit boasts a roster of adventures that includes scuba diving, mountain biking, camel safaris, zip line canopy courses, and luxury sailing cruises. Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 173-9500, www.cabo-adventures.com. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. V $$–$$$$

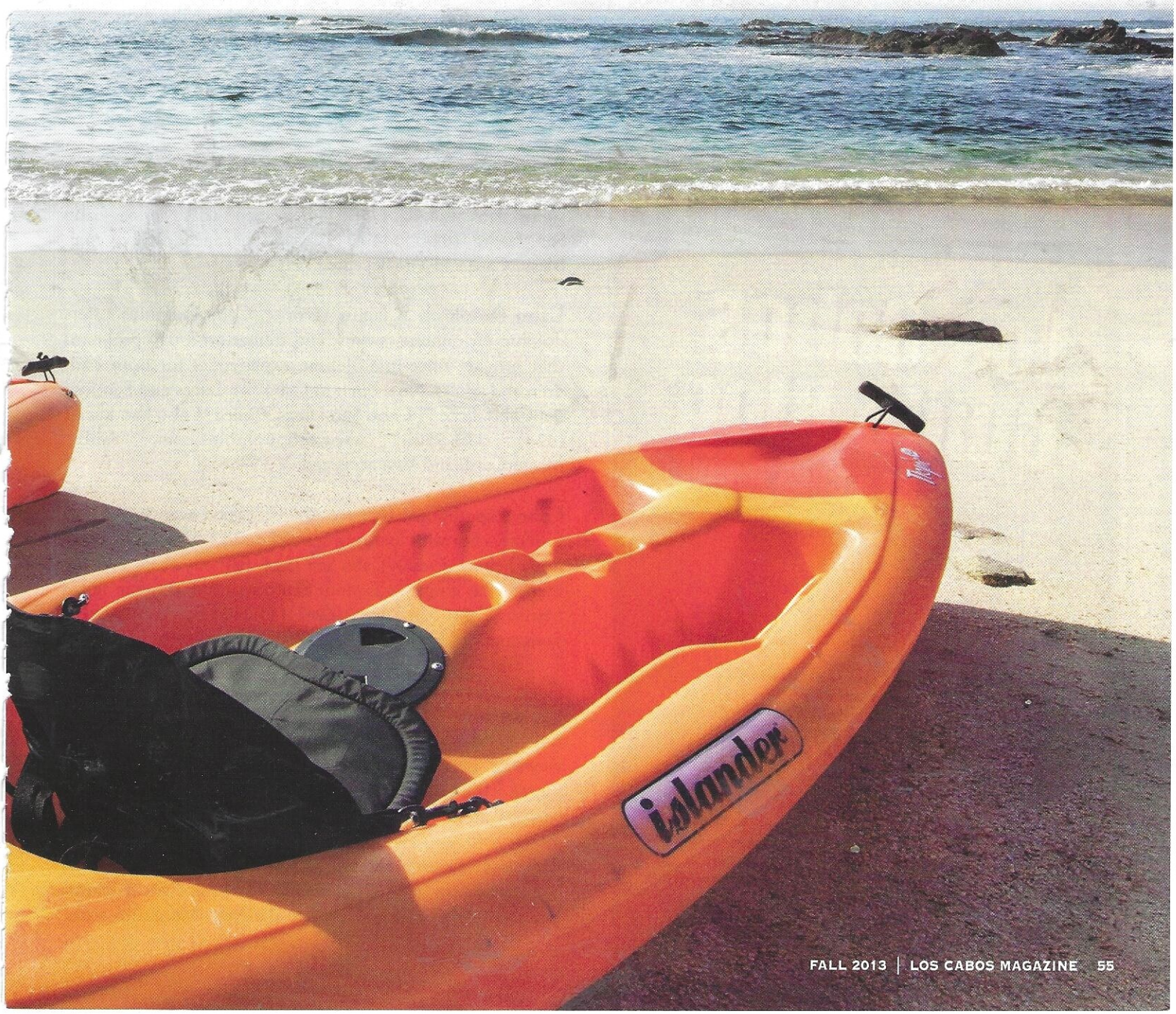
Wild Canyon: This big, bad theme park features plenty of hair-raising rides, ranging from zip lining and bungee jumping to sling swings, camel jaunts, and off-road racing. El Tule Bridge, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 144-4433, www.wildcanyon.com.mx. All major credits cards accepted. V $–$$$

Hang Gliding

Cabo Sky Tours: Hang glider pilot Ernesto Magaña never disappoints. Head out with him for tours that showcase spectacular aerial views of all the local landmarks. Camino Viejo a San Jose, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 144-1294, www.skytourscabo.com. Cash. V $$–$$$$

Off-road Adventures

Baja Buggys: Buckle up for high-octane off-road explorations of picturesque beach and desert terrains. Calle Miguel Hidalgo 2706, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 105-9331, www.bajabuggys.com. MasterCard and Visa accepted. V $

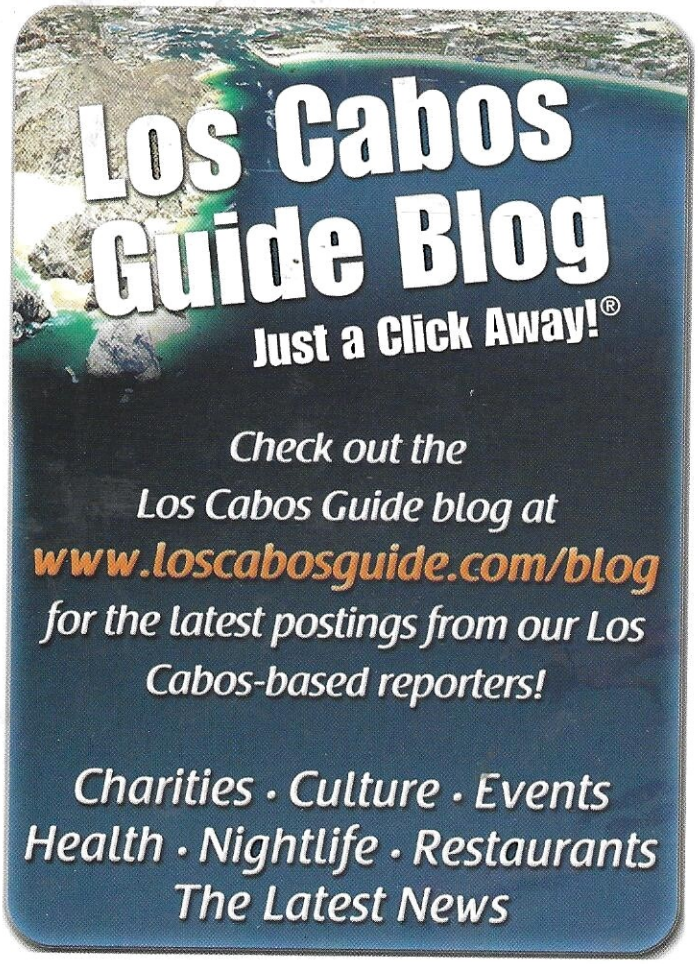


Francisco Estrada

Snap shots of the world-famous arch at Land's End as you relax aboard the Tropicat catamaran.

Camino Aventura: Join Camino Aventura for romantic seaside horseback rides as well as memorable ATV tours along the peninsula's rugged Pacific coast. Km 19 on Carretera Federal, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 105-8413, www.caminoaventura.mx. Master Card and Visa accepted. V $–$$

Wide Open Excursions: What's it like to race in the legendary Baja 1000? Sign up for one of Wide Open's arrive-and-drive race programs and find out about the most challenging off-road racing on the planet. Paseo de la Gaviota, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 105-0500, www.wideopenbaja.com /Cabo. V $$$$



Water Activities

Buccaneer Queen: Set sail for for pirate-themed fun with Cabo's scurviest crew. Snorkeling and sunset cruises, plus occasional plank walking. Dock 1, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 144-4217, www.buccaneerloscabos.com. MasterCard and Visa accepted. V $–$$

Cabo Dolphins: A family favorite, Cabo Dolphins' offers dolphin encounters, swims, and trainer-for-a-day programs that provide once-in-a-lifetime experiences for both children and adults. Now open in Cabo San Lucas and San José del Cabo. Lote 7, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 173-9500, www.cabodolphins.com. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. V $$–$$$$

Cabo Expeditions: Discover the ecological wonders of Baja California Sur with Snuba (a snorkel-scuba hybrid) and underwater helmet dives in Cabo San Lucas Bay, city tours, and day trips to the gorgeous Espíritu Santo Island. Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-2700, www.caboexpeditions.com.mx. MasterCard and Visa accepted. V $–$$$$

Cabo Mar: For a fabulous night of dinner, drinks, and dancing, try Cabo Mar's fiesta-themed dinner cruise, which features Mexican comfort food favorites, Latin rhythms, and views of Land's End. Camino del Cerro 215, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-3797, www.cabo-mar.com. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. V $–$$

Caborey: Luxury catamaran Caborey is famous for its five-star cuisine and a Las Vegas–style floor show featuring Latin American singing and dancing. Margarita cruis-

Courtesy Cabo Adventures

Kayaking is but one of the many adventures you can experience with Cabo Adventures.

es, parasailing, and fast boat tours are also available. Cabo San Lucas, (624) 105-1976, www.caborey.com. MasterCard and Visa accepted. V $$

Cabo Sails: Cruise the seas of Cabo San Lucas with private sailboat charters courtesy of Cabo Sails. From family outings to romantic sunset sails, all charters are customized to meet your specific needs. Dock A, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 355-6386, www.cabosails.com. All major credit cards and PayPal accepted. V $$–$$$$

EcoCat: Cabo San Lucas's sleekest sailing cat features snorkel and kayak tours, romantic sunset cocktail and dinner cruises, plus three bay snorkels aboard the EcoToo. EcoBar and Grill, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 157-4685, www.caboecotours.com. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. V $–$$$$

Fly Hooker: *Los Cabos Magazine*'s fishing expert George Landrum knows how to bag the big ones. Join the captain and his crack crew for customized fishing charters, with all-inclusive packages available. Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-8271, www.fly hooker.com. All major credit cards and PayPal accepted. V $$–$$$

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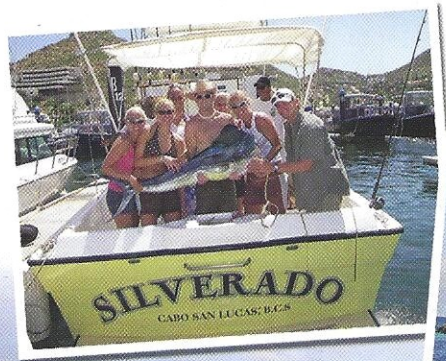

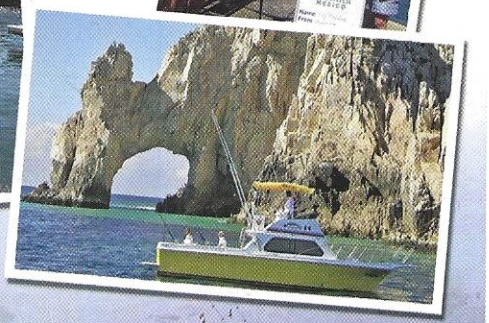

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9. Casa Don Pablo Gallery
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12. El Lunario Gallery
13. Frank Arnold Gallery
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16. Ivan Guaderrama Gallery
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18. La Panga Antigua
19. Mata Ortíz Gallery
20. Mi Casa Restaurant
21. Mi Cocina Restaurant
22. Muvezi African Art
23. Old Town Gallery
24. Organic Market (on Season)
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one of La Princesa's ever-popular theme cruises, which include masquerade parties and salsa nights. Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-7676, www.laprincesacharters.com. All major credit cards and PayPal accepted. V $–$$$$

Pez Gato: Pez Gato knows how to party. Join the fun-loving crew for drinks, dancing, games, and an unforgettable sunset celebration. Dock 4, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-3797, www.pezgato.com. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. V $–$$$$

Picante Bluewater: The fleet of 14 fishing boats ranges in size from the 24-foot Picantito to the 68-foot custom yacht Pegasus, which means Picante can meet any angler's budget. Puerto Paraiso Local 39-A, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-2474, www.picantesportfishing.com. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. V $$–$$$$

Silverados Sportfishing: Silverados has been fishing the local waters for 25 years. Let knowledgeable captains and salty crew lead you to marlin, tuna, sailfish, dorado, and other denizens of the deep. Cabo San Lucas, (624) 144-4903, www.silveradosportfishing.com. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. V $$$$

Sunrider Tours: Snorkel pristine bays, sample fresh local seafood, and enjoy lively entertainment with Sunrider's snorkel-lunch and sunset-dinner cruises. Private charters are also available. Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-2252, www.sunridertours.com. MasterCard and Visa accepted. V $–$$$$

Francisco Estrada

Cabo Dolphins offers dolphin encounters, swims, and trainer-for-a-day programs for children and adults.

Tropicat: Savor Cabo San Lucas seagoing with fine wines, cool jazz, and spectacular sunset views of Land's End and Lover's Beach. Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-3797, www.tropicatcabo.com. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. V $–$$

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Royal Red Rooster Club
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Founded on July 14, 2008, the Royal Red Rooster Club conducts breakfast meetings in Cabo San Lucas, San Jose del Cabo, Todos Santos and soon in La Paz. The organization is comprised of men brought together at a social level who have invested in Baja California Sur, are primarily retired, have a residence or business establishment in the area, or are visiting the area. There are currently approximately 350 members on the roster. Its mission is to promote a forum for the exchange of positive energy and ideas to promote the improvement of life in the area. The organization invites local influential individuals to share their experiences and areas of specific expertise.

Contact us for more information.
E-mail: jc@royalredroosterclub.org
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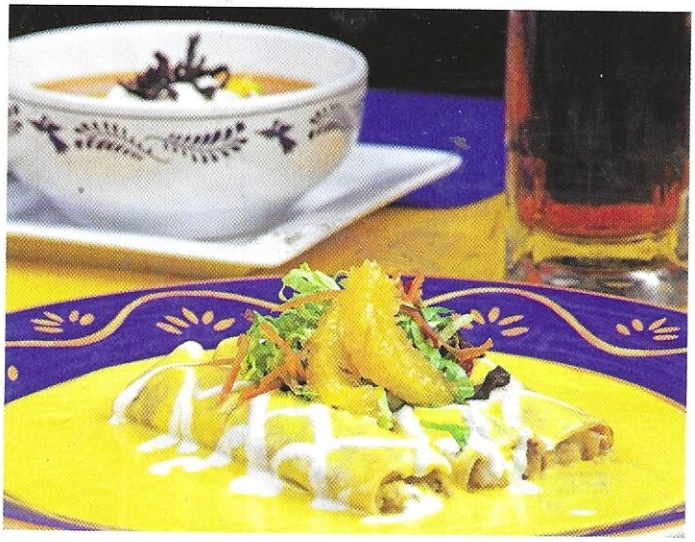
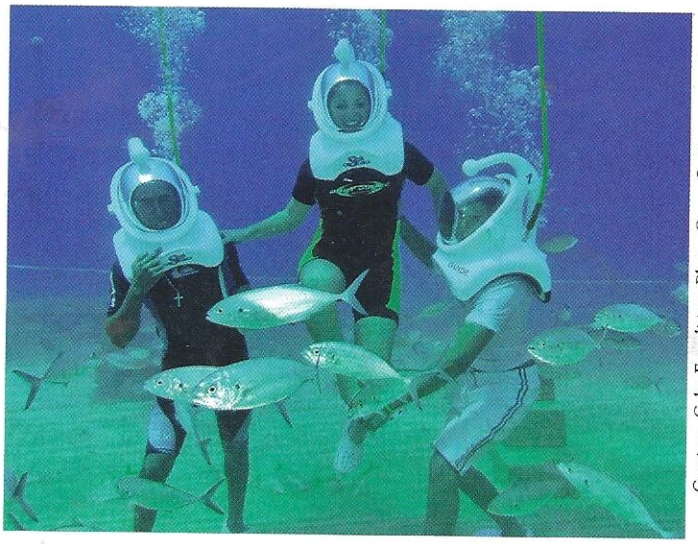


Francisco Estrada

Fish crepes at Hacienda El Coyote.



Courtesy: Cabo Expeditions Photo: Oscar Ortiz

Sea Trek activity with Cabo Expeditions.

Here's the fabulous thing about Los Cabos: You don't have to be a millionaire to live like one. Whether you're George Clooney or Joe the Plumber, you can enjoy the same miles of sandy beach, the same Technicolor sunset over Land's End, and the same mindboggling beautiful blanket of stars each night.

And, thanks to the Los Cabos Magazine Prepaid Voucher Program, what was once potentially prohibitively expensive now falls pleasantly within budget. Vacationing on a budget has never been so necessary ... or easy. Through the Los Cabos Magazine Prepaid Voucher Program, you can get discounts of up to 50 percent on activities, hotels, golfing, car rentals, spas, photography, medical services, dental work, restaurants, and more in Cabo San Lucas, San José del Cabo, and the Tourist Corridor that connects the two cities.

www.loscabosguide.com/discounts

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Many of Los Cabos' most popular businesses participate in the voucher program. Chief among them are Bahia Hotel, Budget, Cabo Expeditions, Cabo Adventures, Chamuyo, Hacienda El Coyote, Madeira Bistro, Silverado's Sportfishing, Camino Adventura, La Golondrina, National Car Rental, Pez Gato, and Wild Canyon.

Here is how the Los Cabos Magazine Prepaid Voucher Program works:

1. Make a list of everything you want to do while in Los Cabos. What are the restaurants you want to visit (see our writers' suggestions on page 70)? The activities you just have to do (check out page 54 for ideas)? Then start thinking about how much you plan to spend at each business. Most Los Cabos spas, restaurants, and activities list prices on their websites. You can also consult their information pages on www.loscabosguide.com.

2. Once you have your list, see which businesses participate in the prepaid voucher program: www.loscabosguide.com/discounts. The newly redesigned page is easy to navigate, and you can search by category or the special 50 percent off section.

3. Once you have figured how much you need for each business, just let us know. You can order prepaid vouchers from our offices in San Diego (800-569-0172) or Cabo San Lucas (624-143-1346). San Diego orders can be shipped to you (a delivery fee may apply), and Cabo San Lucas orders can be picked up from our offices. Vouchers can sell out quickly, so contact our offices as soon as you know what you would like.

4. Don't fret should you have any leftover vouchers. Unused vouchers can be returned for a refund within 120 days of original purchase.

To learn more about the Los Cabos Magazine Prepaid Voucher Program, go to: www.loscabosguide.com/discounts

Participating Businesses

Activities

Baja Outback
Buccaneer Queen
Cabo Expeditions
Cabo Karting Center
Cabo Legend
Cabo Mar
Cabo Sails
Camel Quest
Camino Aventura
Canopy Costa Azul
Eco Cat
La Princesa
Off Road Runners
Pez Gato
Sunderland
Sunrider Adventures
Tropicat
Wild Canyon

Hotels and Resorts

Wyndham Resort
Marbella Suites

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Sportfishing

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Voucher availability is subject to change.
Please check our website often for the latest participants and special offers.

Restaurants

Alcaravea Gourmet
Arre Mango
Baja Cantina Beach
Baja Cantina Marina
Baja Lobster Co.
Baja Peppers
Bar Esquina
Capitan Tony's
Casianos
Cata Wine
Chamuyo
De Cortez
Dos Mares Grill & Bar
El Coral
Guaycura
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Madeira Bistro
María Corona
Mariscos Mocambo
Mi Casa
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Peacock's
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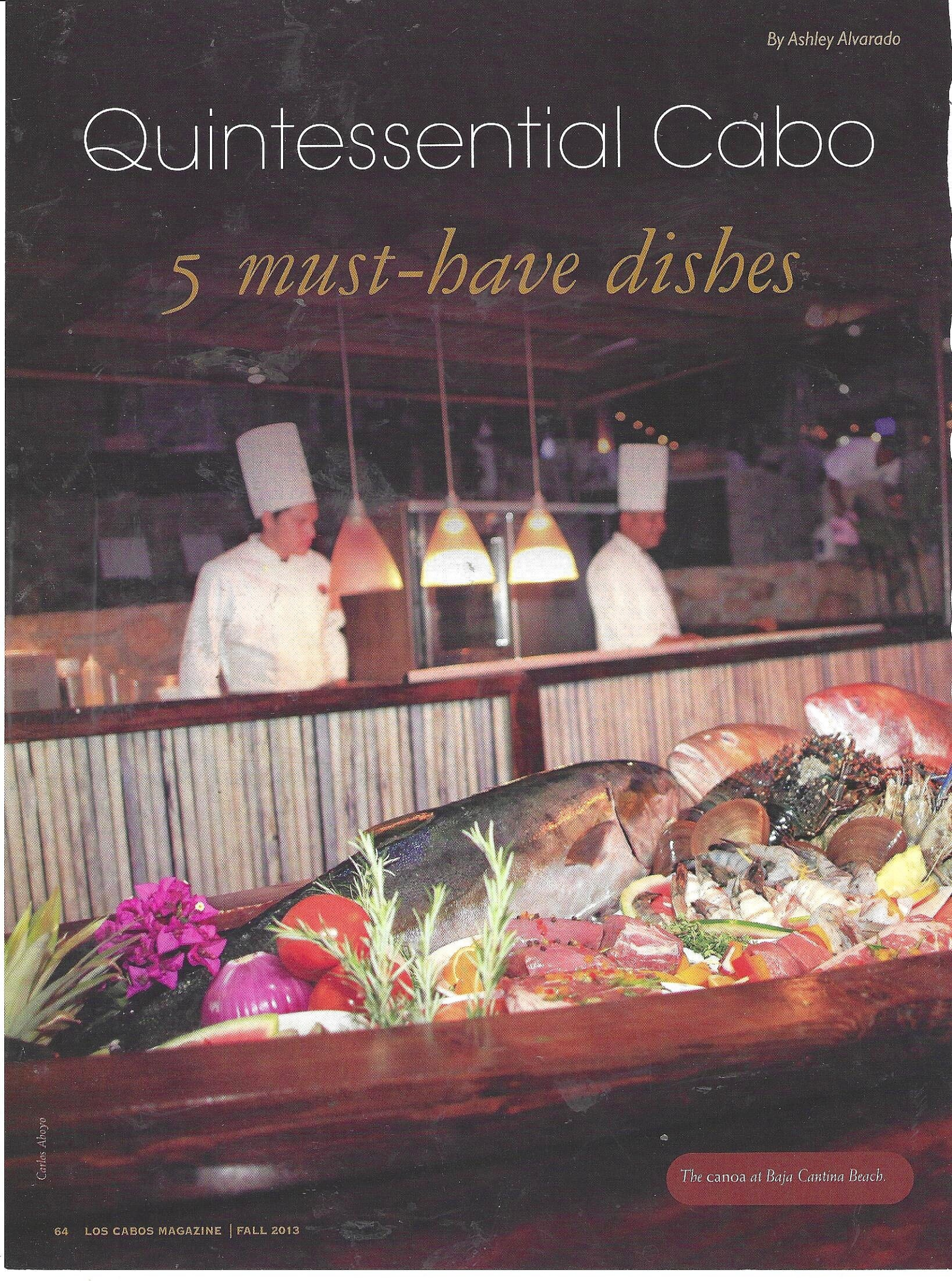
Like us on

By Ashley Alvarado

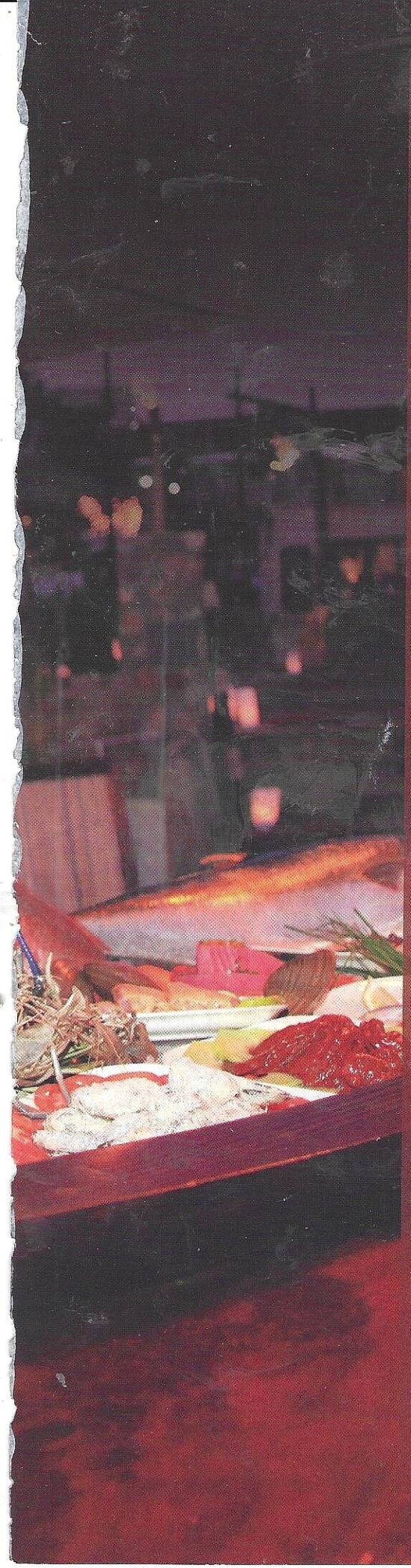
Quintessential Cabo

5 must-have dishes



Carlos Ahoyo

The canoa at Baja Cantina Beach.



There is no better way to court reader outrage than to create a best-of list. Nevertheless, we at *Los Cabos Magazine* have decided to brave the storm and name five must-have dishes that are quintessentially Cabo. It's a daunting task, and we are not so crazy as to call these dishes better than the rest—not when Cabo is also home to such fantastic menu highlights as Nick-San's famous spicy tuna, Los Deseos' tequila-style *queso fundido*, and king-size lobster at La Golondrina. Like many of our readers, we love the lobster burrito at the legendary Cabo Wabo Cantina and the seafood pasta at Romeo & Julieta.

And so we will instead spend the next couple of pages highlighting those must-have meals we tell our friends about; these are the repasts that can make us salivate from more than a thousand miles away. Please read on, then tell us what you think about our selections as well your favorite Cabo dishes over on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/loscabosguide.

Tortilla Soup at Mi Casa

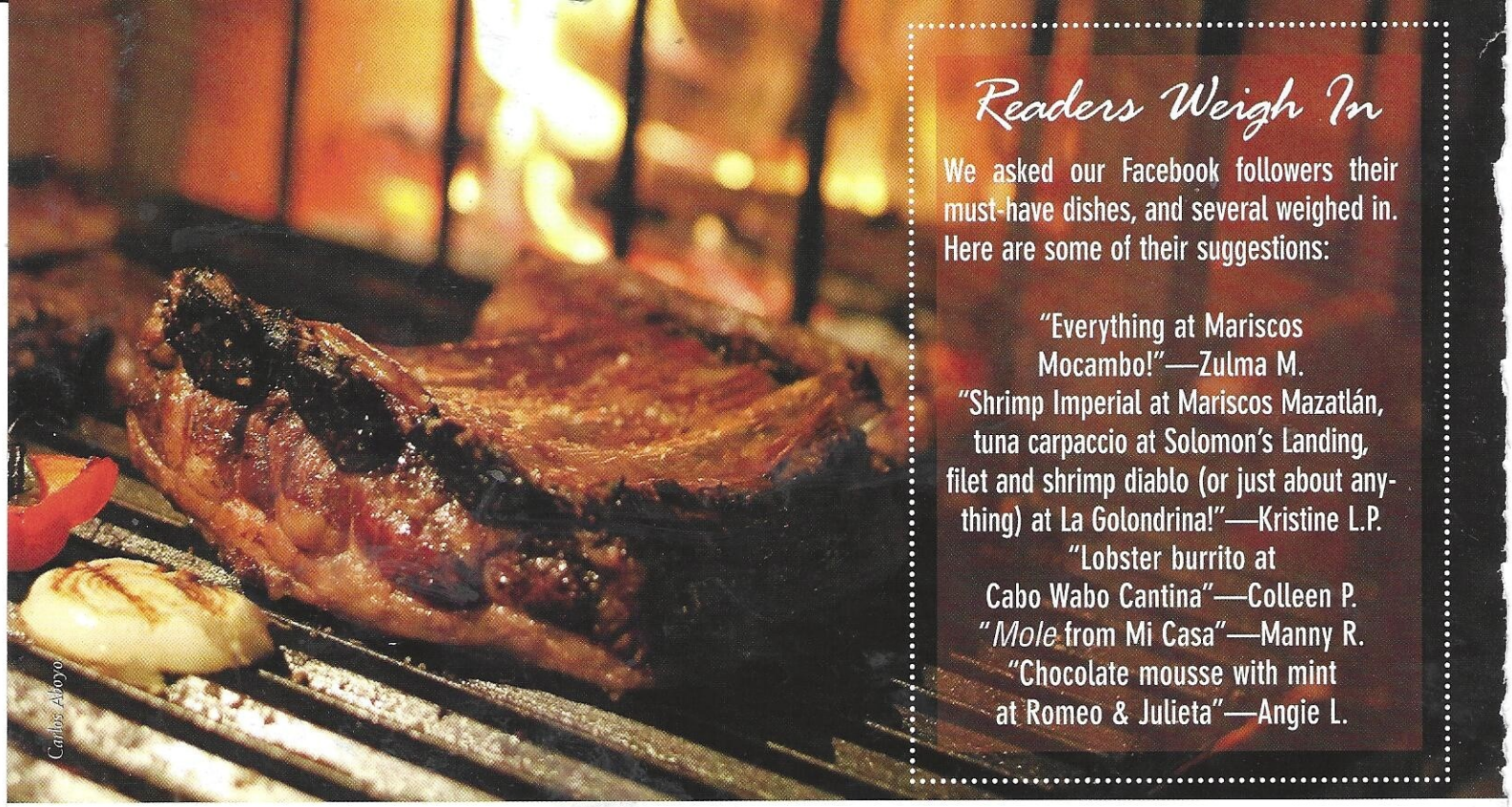
Tortilla soup, also known as *sopa azteca de la tortilla*, is shrouded in mystery. Nobody knows where it came from, not even Mexican cooking authority Diana Kennedy. But Kennedy, like most, has a favorite style of tortilla soup. In 2005, she told the *L.A. Times*, "To be really authentic, the soup should have only a little white onion, raw not cooked, blended with roasted tomato." She continued, "A tortilla soup without epazote is not worth eating, to my mind. But I'm a purist." *Los Cabos Magazine* readers rightfully go gaga for the tortilla soup at Mi Casa, a Cabo San Lucas institution that has served up authentic Mexican cuisine for more than two decades. Our readers' devotion is understandable. Mi Casa's sopa de la tortilla is made with a rich broth of tomato, ground tortilla, and epazote. Cream, cheese, and avocado add richness, while *chile pasilla* rings spices up the flavor profile. *Mi Casa, Avenida Cabo San Lucas S/N, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-8245, www.micasarestaurant.com.mx. Also: Calle Obregón 19, San José del Cabo, (624) 146-9263.*

Almejas Chocolatas (Chocolate Clams) at Mariscos Mocambo

Whenever I find myself chatting with someone in the airport or on a plane to Los Cabos, I make the same emphatic suggestion: "You absolutely have to try the chocolate clams!" Known as almejas chocolatas in Spanish, chocolate clams are named for their uniformly brown color. Don't worry: They're not covered in chocolate, and they don't taste anything like a Hershey's Kiss. Instead, chocolate clams are large and meaty with a slight hint of brininess. You'll find several types of preparations in Los Cabos, but I most enjoy chocolate clams when they're served raw and in their shell: just as they come at Mariscos Mocambo, a Veracruz-style seafood restaurant in the heart of downtown Cabo San Lucas. Make like a local, and top your chocolate clams with lime, salt, Huichol hot sauce, and soy sauce. Others sometimes add everything from ketchup to mayonnaise. Slurp directly from the shell or scoop with crackers, chips, or broken tostadas. *Mariscos Mocambo, Leona Vicario and 20 de Noviembre, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-2122, www.mariscosmocambo.com.*

The Slow-Cooked Beef Rib at Chamuyo Parillada Argentina

Chamuyo Parillada Argentina is an effortlessly chic amalgam of moonlit alfresco dining, a bold Argentina-sourced wine selection, and a menu built on a chef's love affair with beef and garlic. Indeed, the experienced team behind Chamuyo—they also own and operate sister restaurant Corazón de Alcachofa—has introduced the best of Buenos Aires to Los Cabos. The setting is as sexy as a dance hall tango, and the high-protein menu would impress any



Readers Weigh In

We asked our Facebook followers their must-have dishes, and several weighed in. Here are some of their suggestions:

"Everything at Mariscos Mocambo!"—Zulma M.
"Shrimp Imperial at Mariscos Mazatlán, tuna carpaccio at Solomon's Landing, filet and shrimp diablo (or just about anything) at La Golondrina!"—Kristine L.P.
"Lobster burrito at Cabo Wabo Cantina"—Colleen P.
"*Mole* from Mi Casa"—Manny R.
"Chocolate mousse with mint at Romeo & Julieta"—Angie L.

The slow-cooked 22-ounce beef ribs at Chamuyo Parillada Argentina are grilled for a minimum of four and a half hours to lock in the flavors.

gaucho worth his *rebenque* ("leather whip"). We are big fans of the *parillada para dos* ("grill for two"), which includes ribs, skirt steak, Argentine sausage, green salad, and a bottle of wine. The fried empanadas are mouthwatering, too. But nothing quite compares with the enormous 22-ounce beef ribs, which are grilled for an absolute minimum of four and a half hours to lock in the flavor and juices. The ribs are, simply put, amazing: unbelievably rich and tender. Want to sound like a real Argentine? Pronounce the restaurant's name as "shamooshow." It means, by the way, "to shoot the breeze." *Chamuyo Parillada Argentina, Paseo del Pescador at Acuario, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-4900, www.chamuyo.mx.*

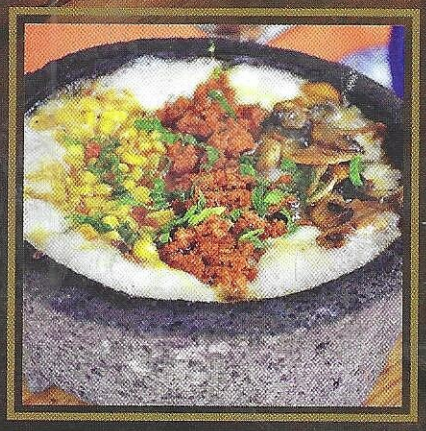
The Short Rib Pizza at Bar Esquina

The sexy theme continues at Bar Esquina, the sleek on-site restaurant at the darling boutique-style resort Bahia Hotel. The mystique of the Alhambra is in every detail of Bar Esquina, from its hanging lights to the exhibition kitchen's tiled walls. Small tabletop flames dance about as a breeze sneaks its way up from nearby Médano Beach. Servers helpfully guide you an inventive menu crafted by Puerto Rico–born, Tennessee-raised chef Laurent Saussy. There are many, many winners on Bar Esquina's menu: We've enjoyed everything from *chilaquiles verdes* to lobster spaghetti and spicy yellowtail. But it's the short rib pizza that takes the wow factor to a whole new level. The perfectly crisp personal-size pizza is topped with tender short ribs, fresh arugula, and potent blue cheese. On our most recent visit to Bar Esquina, dinner companions—a chef at a competing restaurant among them—were so impressed by the pizza that upon sampling it, they immediately ordered two more. Taste one, and you'll understand why. *Bar Esquina, Bahia Hotel, Avenida El Pescador S/N, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1890, www.baresquina.com.*

The Canoa at Baja Cantina Beach

Our fifth and final must-have Cabo dish is not so much a dish as it is a concept. The owners of Baja Cantina Beach—and its sister restaurants, Baja Cantina Marina, María Corona, and Tiki Bar—did the near impossible and improved on perfection with the introduction of a *canoa*, or "canoe." The canoe recreates a centuries-old culinary tradition, when long-ago fishermen would arrive on the shore and sell their catches. Today, guests at this Médano Beach waterfront restaurant and beach club are invited to visit Baja Cantina's canoe and select their protein. Freshly caught options include lobster, shrimp, scallops, and in-season fish. There's also imported USDA steaks and chops. You then tell executive chef Javier Galindo and his team how you would like your entrée prepared; servers will bring it directly to your table, accompanied by house-made bread, stuffed baby potatoes, and seasonal vegetables. While you wait, peruse the robust Baja Cantina menu, quaff one of the expertly prepared cocktails from the full bar, dig your toes into the sand, and look out toward Land's End, the Sea of Cortés, and the starry night's sky. After dinner, treat yourself to a selection from Baja Cantina's collection of cigars. *Baja Catina Beach, Médano Beach, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1111, www.bajacantinabeachclub.com, callcenter@bajacantinagroup.com.*

Authentic Mexican Cuisine



The mole is made from scratch from the toasting of the chiles to grinding the almonds in traditional stone "metate". Our tortillas are handmade, the salsas are prepared in pre-Hispanic stone molcajetes, Guacamole prepared at your table...

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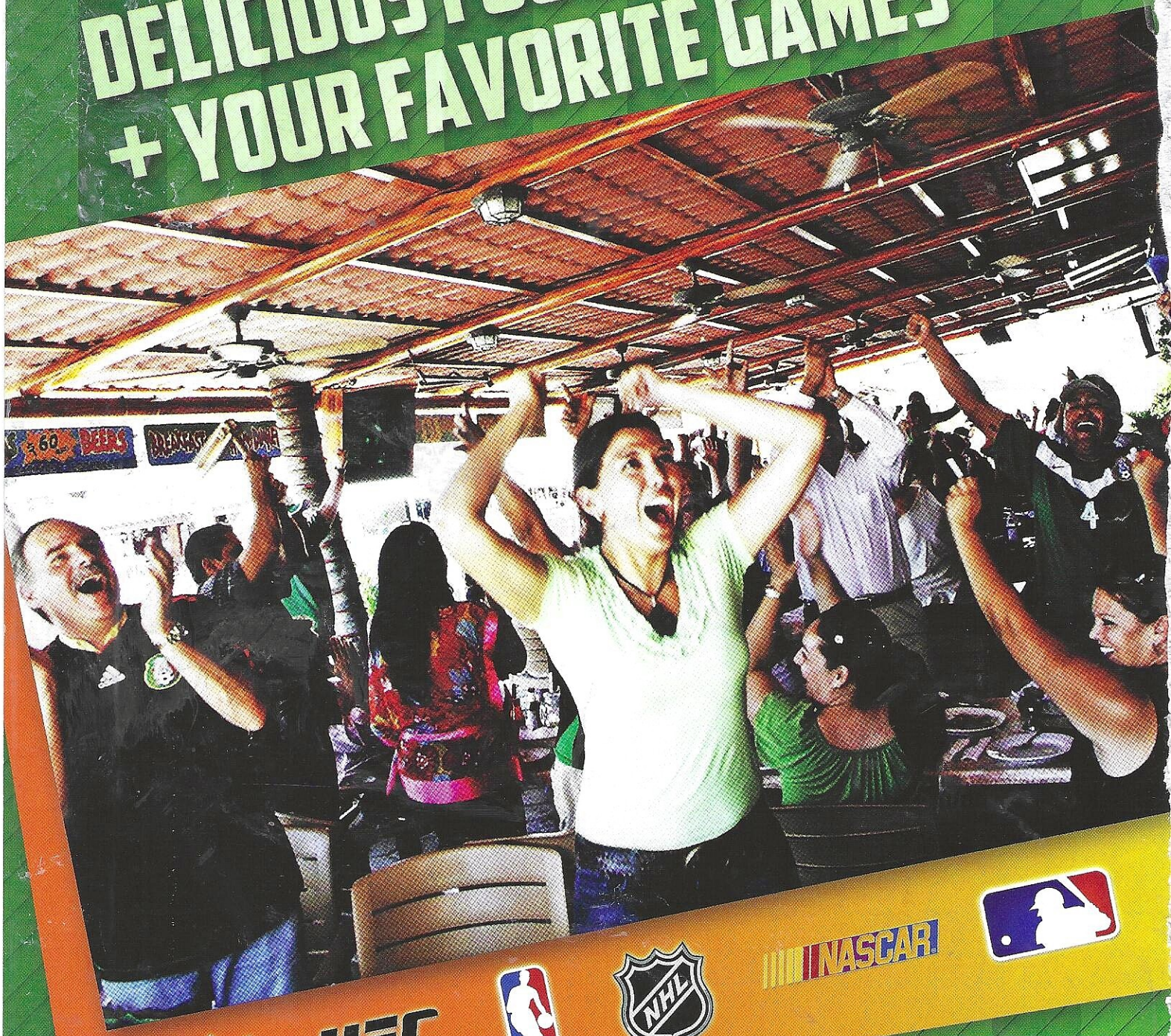

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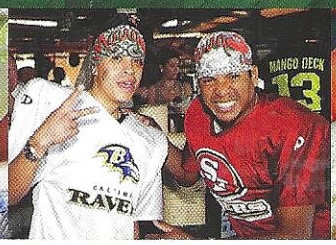

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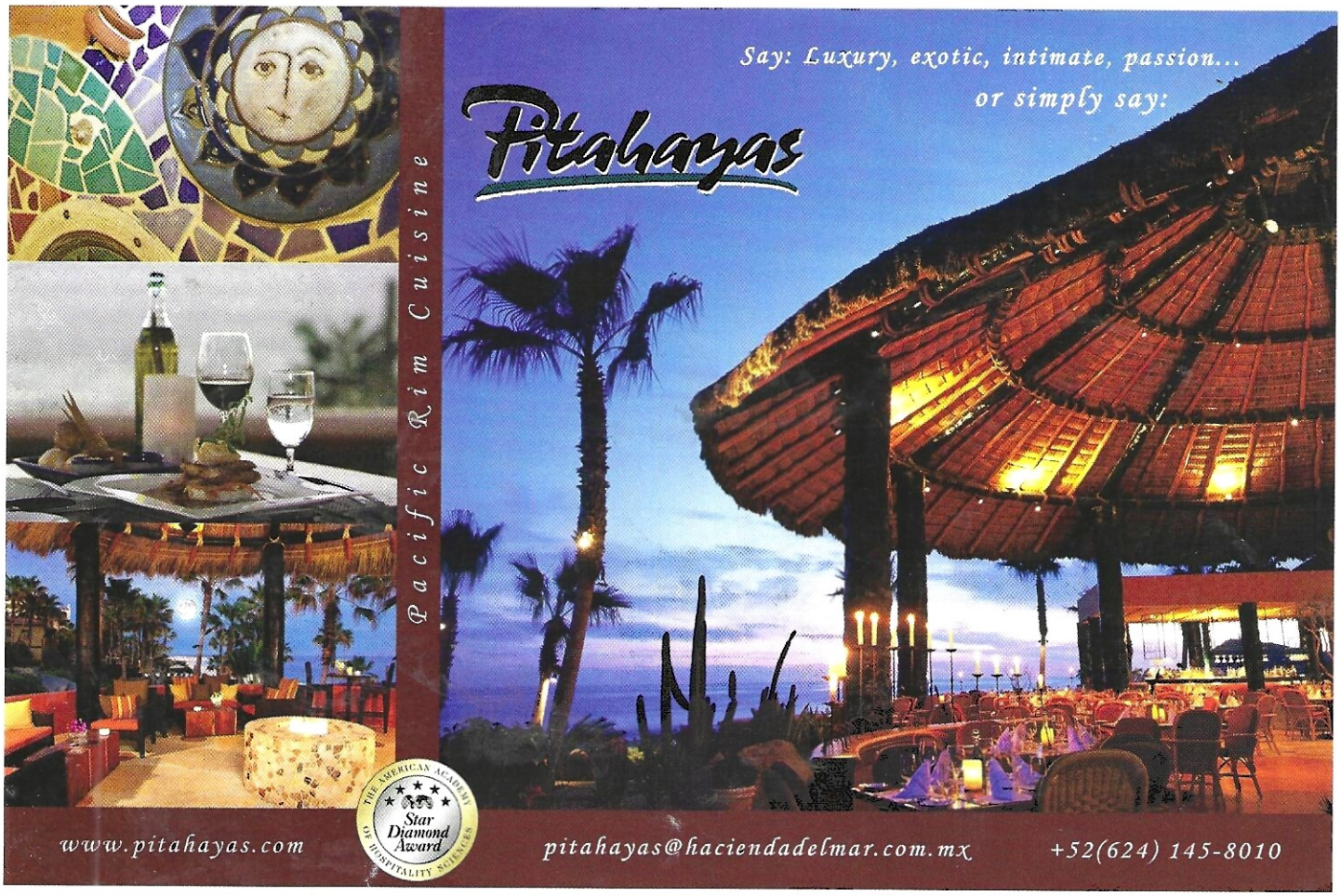
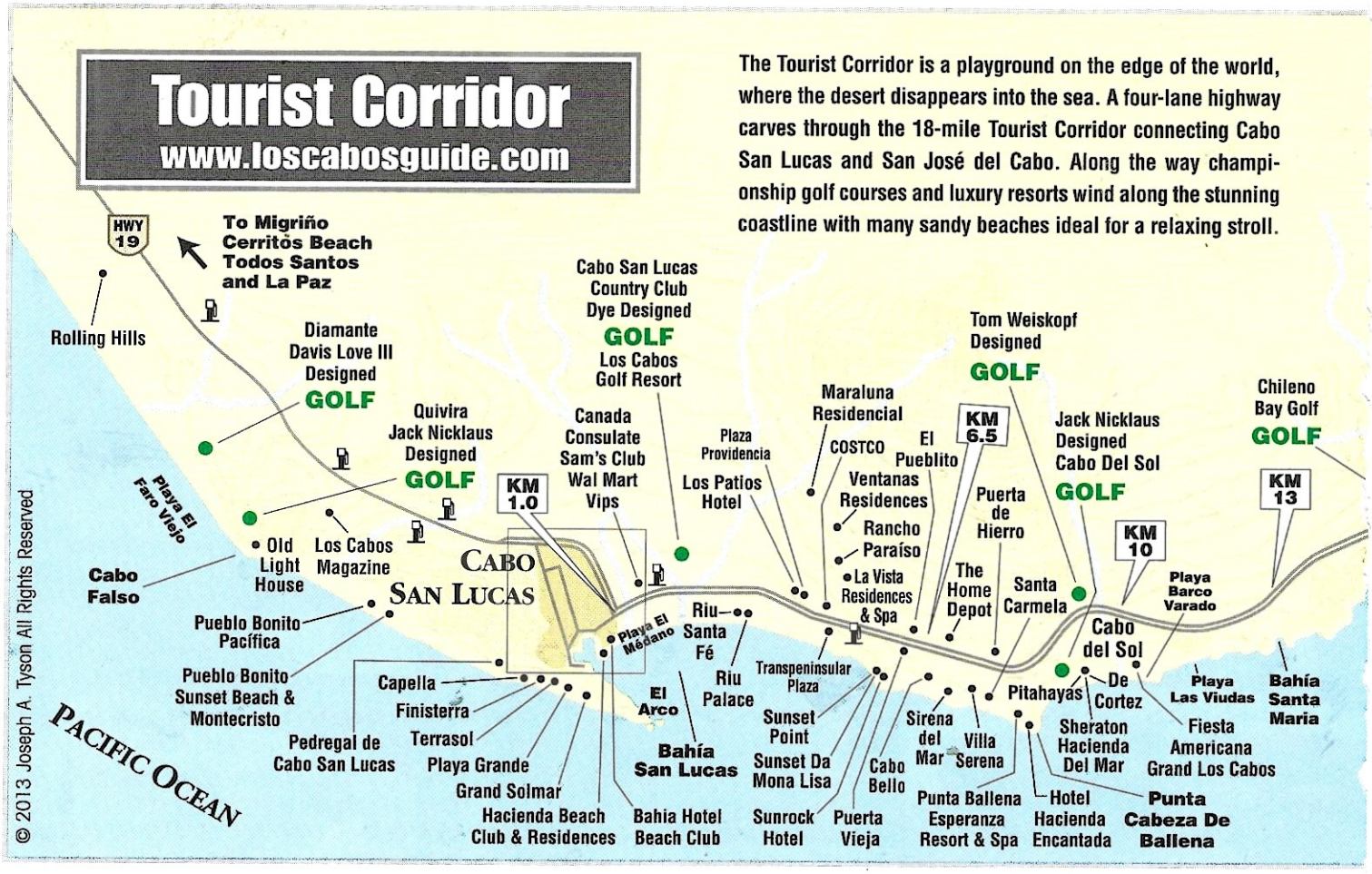


Tourist Corridor

www.loscabosguide.com

The Tourist Corridor is a playground on the edge of the world, where the desert disappears into the sea. A four-lane highway carves through the 18-mile Tourist Corridor connecting Cabo San Lucas and San José del Cabo. Along the way championship golf courses and luxury resorts wind along the stunning coastline with many sandy beaches ideal for a relaxing stroll.



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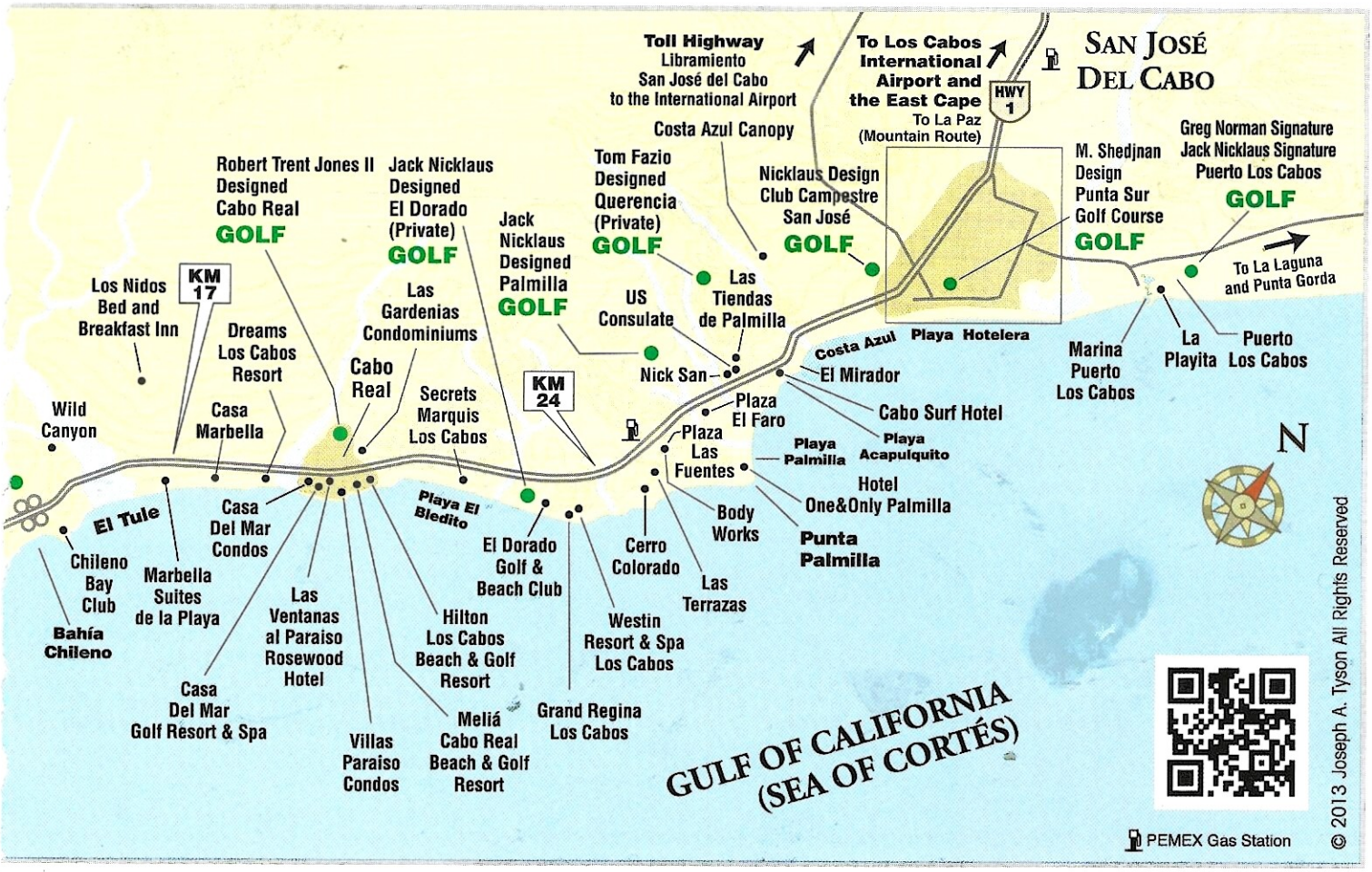
Toll Highway
Libramiento
San José del Cabo
to the International Airport
To Los Cabos International Airport and the East Cape
To La Paz
(Mountain Route)
HWY 1
SAN JOSÉ DEL CABO
Costa Azul Canopy
Tom Fazio Designed Querencia (Private) GOLF
Nicklaus Design Club Campestre San José GOLF
M. Shedjnan Design Punta Sur Golf Course GOLF
Greg Norman Signature
Jack Nicklaus Signature
Puerto Los Cabos
GOLF
Robert Trent Jones II Designed Cabo Real GOLF
Jack Nicklaus Designed El Dorado (Private) GOLF
Jack Nicklaus Designed Palmilla GOLF
Las Tiendas de Palmilla
US Consulate
To La Laguna and Punta Gorda
Los Nidos Bed and Breakfast Inn
KM 17
Las Gardenias Condominiums
Dreams Los Cabos Resort
Cabo Real
Nick San
Costa Azul
Playa Hotelera
El Mirador
Marina Puerto Los Cabos
La Playita
Puerto Los Cabos
Wild Canyon
Casa Marbella
Secrets Marquis Los Cabos
KM 24
Plaza El Faro
Cabo Surf Hotel
Plaza Las Fuentes
Playa Palmilla
Playa Acapulquito
N
Hotel One&Only Palmilla
Body Works
Punta Palmilla
El Tule
Playa El Bledito
Casa Del Mar Condos
El Dorado Golf & Beach Club
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Marbella Suites de la Playa
Las Ventanas al Paraiso Rosewood Hotel
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Grand Regina Los Cabos
GULF OF CALIFORNIA (SEA OF CORTÉS)
PEMEX Gas Station
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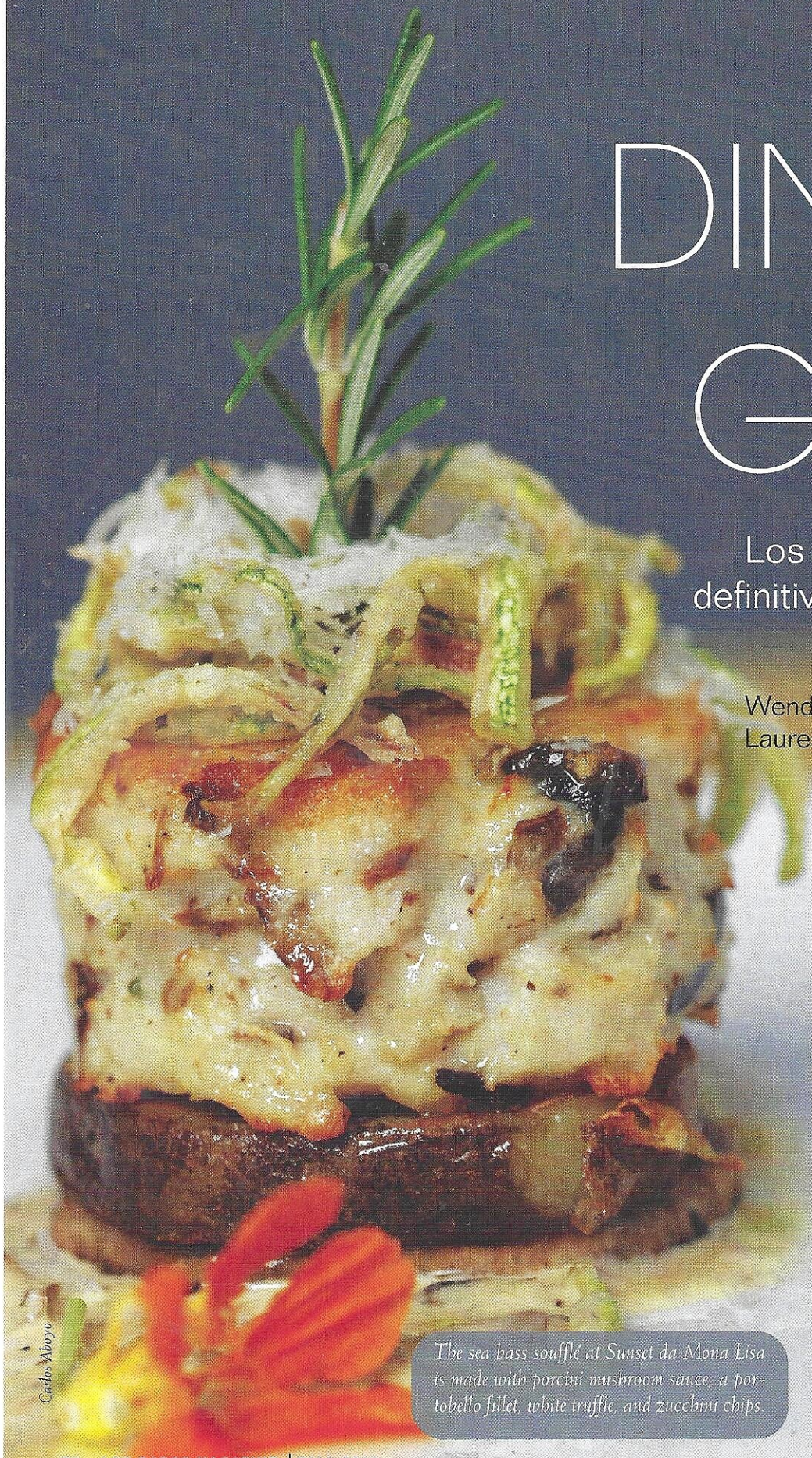
THE DINING GUIDE

Los Cabos Magazine's definitive restaurant directory

By Ashley Alvarado, Wendy Atkinson, Sandra Berry, Lauren Glenn, Cynthia Merkley, and Chris Sands



The sea bass soufflé at Sunset da Mona Lisa is made with porcini mushroom sauce, a portobello fillet, white truffle, and zucchini chips.

Carlos Aboyo

Alcaravea Gourmet

My four-foot-nine mother always says that the best things in life come in small packages. That's an adage that applies to both her and chef Enrique Diaz's exceptional Alcaravea Gourmet restaurant in downtown Cabo San Lucas. What began as a small, 15-seat Mediterranean café has grown to a still-cozy 60-person-capacity restaurant that consistently blows away patrons' expectations—and the competition. Online travel sites are filled with reviewer comments like "Hands Down Best Place in Cabo" and "Been Here, done it, and will do it again." We can understand their enthusiasm after having sampled dishes like the Alcaravea mushrooms (the mushrooms are sautéed with white wine, extra-virgin olive oil, Parmesan cheese, Marsala

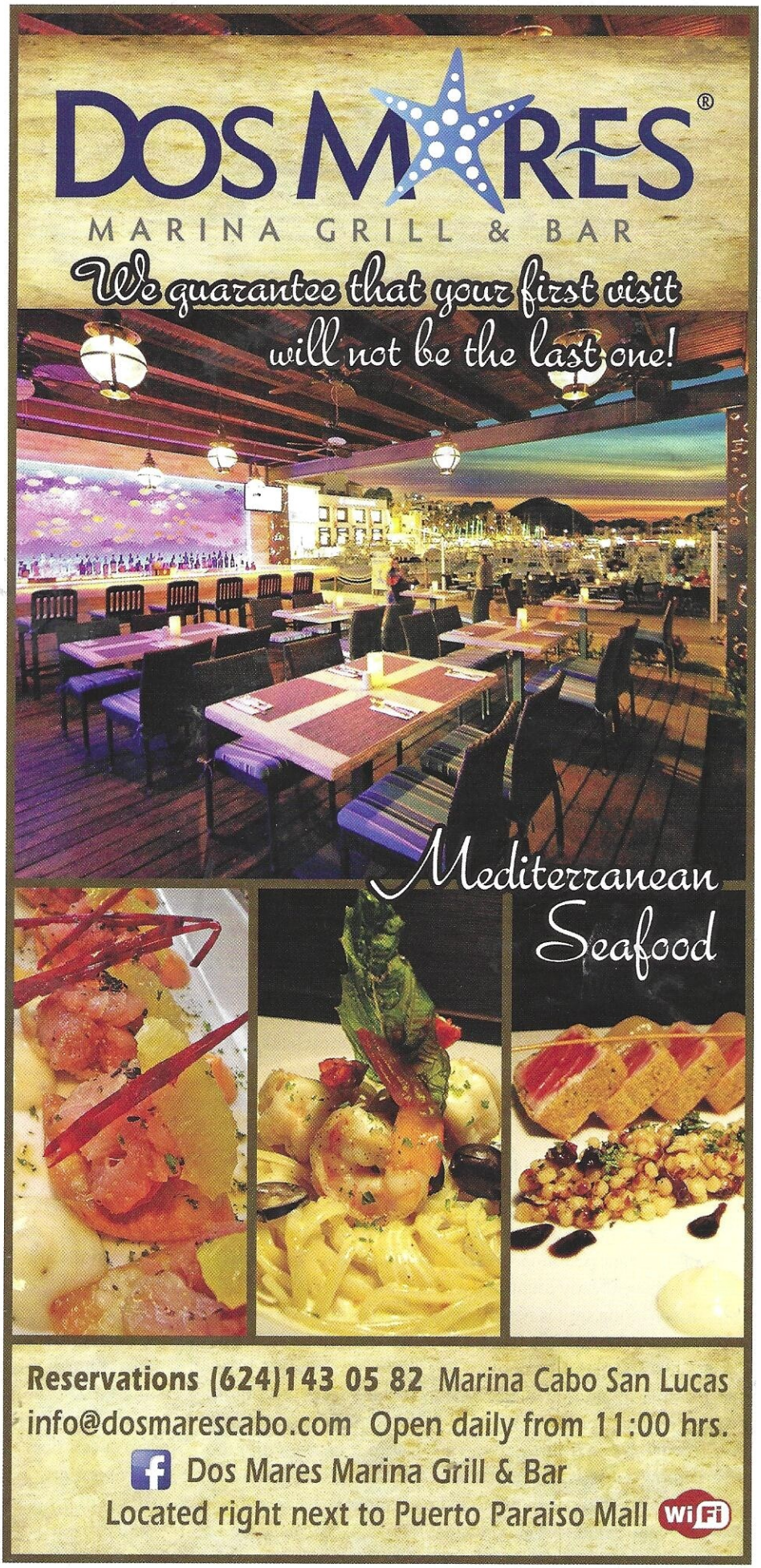
wine, sage, basil, and oregano, then baked), Sea Earth carpaccio salad (thinly sliced fish, salmon, and beef are served with arugula and Parmesan), and the carbonara prepared with freshly made pasta. The wine list impresses, as does the dessert menu: Don't leave without sampling the decadent tiramisu. Avenida 16 de Septiembre and Ignacio Zaragoza, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-3730. Mon.–Sat. noon–11 p.m. All major cards and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$ A.A.

Arre Mango

Cabo's premier karaoke bar also happens to have an excellent dinner menu and unbeatable prices. Arre Mango—part of the distinguished Grupo Mango restaurant family that also operates Mango Deck and Mango Cantina—brings the festive party vibe from Médano Beach to downtown Cabo San Lucas, where its spacious, well-appointed venue comes to life with music. The karaoke catalog includes more than 100,000 songs in English and Spanish Come early, though, to enjoy a family-friendly dinner; the *comal de arrachera* is a feast that includes tortillas, guacamole, salsas, sausage and traditional arrachera steak. Don't pass up the signature, secret-recipe Arre Mango cocktail or the brand-new Paloma served in a traditional *jarrito* from Guadalajara. Then stick around to show off your singing chops. Valet parking. Boulevard Lázaro Cárdenas, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 144-4300, www.arremango.com. Sun. 8 p.m.–3 a.m., Tues.–Thurs. 8 p.m.–3 a.m., Fri.–Sat. 8 p.m.–5 a.m. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$ A.A.

Baja Cantina Beach

In this issue of *Los Cabos Magazine*, we highlight must-have dishes that demonstrate why Los Cabos has earned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Don't miss mariachi night at Arre Mango.

its designation as the culinary capital of Baja California Sur ("Quintessential Cabo," page 64). Chief among those menu items is the Baja Cantina Beach *"canoa,"* a canoe filled with ice and topped with selections from the sea (lobster, shrimp, fish, and scallops) as well as the finest in meat cuts for the chef to prepare to order. Baja Cantina has recreated a culinary tradition that started centuries ago by bringing the freshest ingredients to you. The canoa, though, is but one of many reasons to visit the spacious, beachfront restaurant, bar, and beach club. Its location on the sprawling Médano Beach makes it an ideal spot for relaxing during the day; retreat here for a beer and ceviche after riding a wave runner through the Cabo San Lucas Bay. The vantage also looks out toward the arch at Land's End. Come nightfall, you can reserve the private tiki hut for a romantic dinner, saddle up on one of the swing-seats at the beachfront bar for a margarita, or select an item from its sophisticated-yet-accessible dinner menu. Médano Beach, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1111, www.bajacantinabeachclub.com, callcenter@bajacantinagroup.com. Daily 8 a.m.–11 p.m. MasterCard, Visa and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ A.A.

Baja Cantina Marina

The team behind Baja Cantina Marina—as well as its sister restaurants, Baja Cantina Beach, the Tiki Bar, and María Corona—have clearly identified a recipe for success. The Cabo San Lucas Marina spot is never empty, and it serves as the headquarters for the world's richest annual fishing tournament, Bisbee's Black & Blue. Speaking of fish, seafood specialties headline a dinner menu that is also rich in pastas, steaks, and traditional Mexican favorites. Start with the superb *ceviche*, made from the fresh catch of the day, or dip into a hearty cioppino with shrimp, mussels, clams, crab, Mexican sea bass, red wine, and tomato broth. For your entrée, I recommend the baby back pork ribs marinated in Baja Cantina's house barbecue sauce or the *culichi*-style fish and sautéed shrimp bathed in *poblano* chile sauce and melted cheese. Each are delicious, but then again, you really can't go wrong at Baja Cantina. Combo platters for two are yet another excellent option, particularly the Puerto Nuevo, which boasts couples-friendly portions of filet mignon, shrimp, and lobster. Special events include ladies' nights on Fridays, featuring live music and free drinks for female guests. The restaurant was awarded with Cristal certification for its consistently safe and hygienic preparation of food. Baja Cantina, Cabo San Lucas Marina at Dock L-M behind the Wyndham Resort, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1111, www.baja cantinamarina.com. Daily 8 a.m.–midnight. AmEx, Master Card, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ C.S.

Baja Lobster Co.

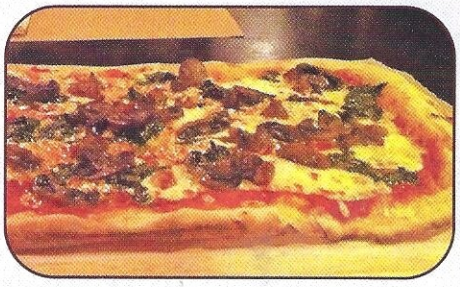
This Cabo San Lucas Marina mainstay is like a living, breathing celebration of Baja California Sur's abundant sea life. Since taking over the Baja Lobster Co. kitchen, chef Samanta Tirada has quietly but expertly updated the menu. The lineup includes a happy mix of traditional and innovative preparations of lobster, shrimp, tuna, and more. On your first trip, try the deservedly popular Sea Star salad, which is made of fresh mixed greens with bite-size pieces of octopus, scallops, calamari, and melons. My personal favorites include the piquant *aguachile* shrimp (the shrimp is marinated in lime juice and a three-chile sauce), salmon carpaccio, coconut shrimp, grilled tuna medallions, and the lobster with curry (prepared with coconut milk, apples, pears, bananas, and curry). For non-seafood eaters: The filet mignon and chicken in peanut sauce are chef favorites. Don't pass up the house speciality apple strudel. To escape the heat of the Los Cabos fall months, you can retreat to the air-conditioned dining rooms. But for a relaxing evening, try the cantilevered deck. The views (and bar) will be your reward. Marina Golden Zone, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-6011, www.goldenzonecabo.com. Major credit cards and vouchers accepted. Daily 3 p.m.–midnight. $–$$$ A.A.

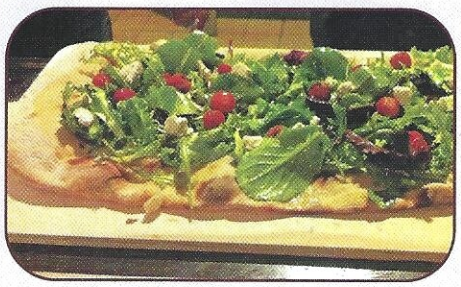
Bar Esquina

To leave Los Cabos without having dined at Bar Esquina is to have not really experienced Los Cabos at all. The on-site restaurant and bar at the Bahia Hotel boutique resort in the Médano Beach district represents the essence of Cabo: It's sleek, chic, sexy, and playful. The space's Moroccan style and mystique embolden, while the evocative menu beckons. Dinner highlights include tuna tartar (a mound of marinated and seasoned raw fish delicately served on a plate surrounded with ginger, chile, and avocado), braised short ribs with beet risotto, and short rib pizza. Walk by the corner spot any given evening, and you'll see ceiling fans lazily oscillating, sheer draperies billowing out of open arches, and Turkish lanterns providing a romantic glow. Return come morning for one of Cabo's most underrated breakfast

Fire Power

Baja Peppers spices things up with new pizza menu

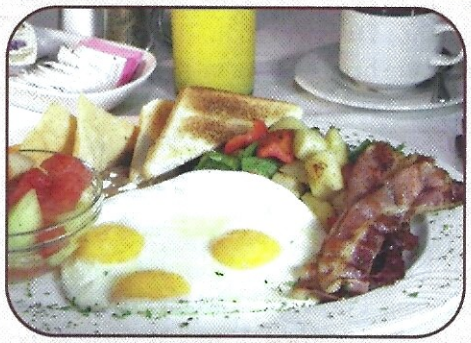


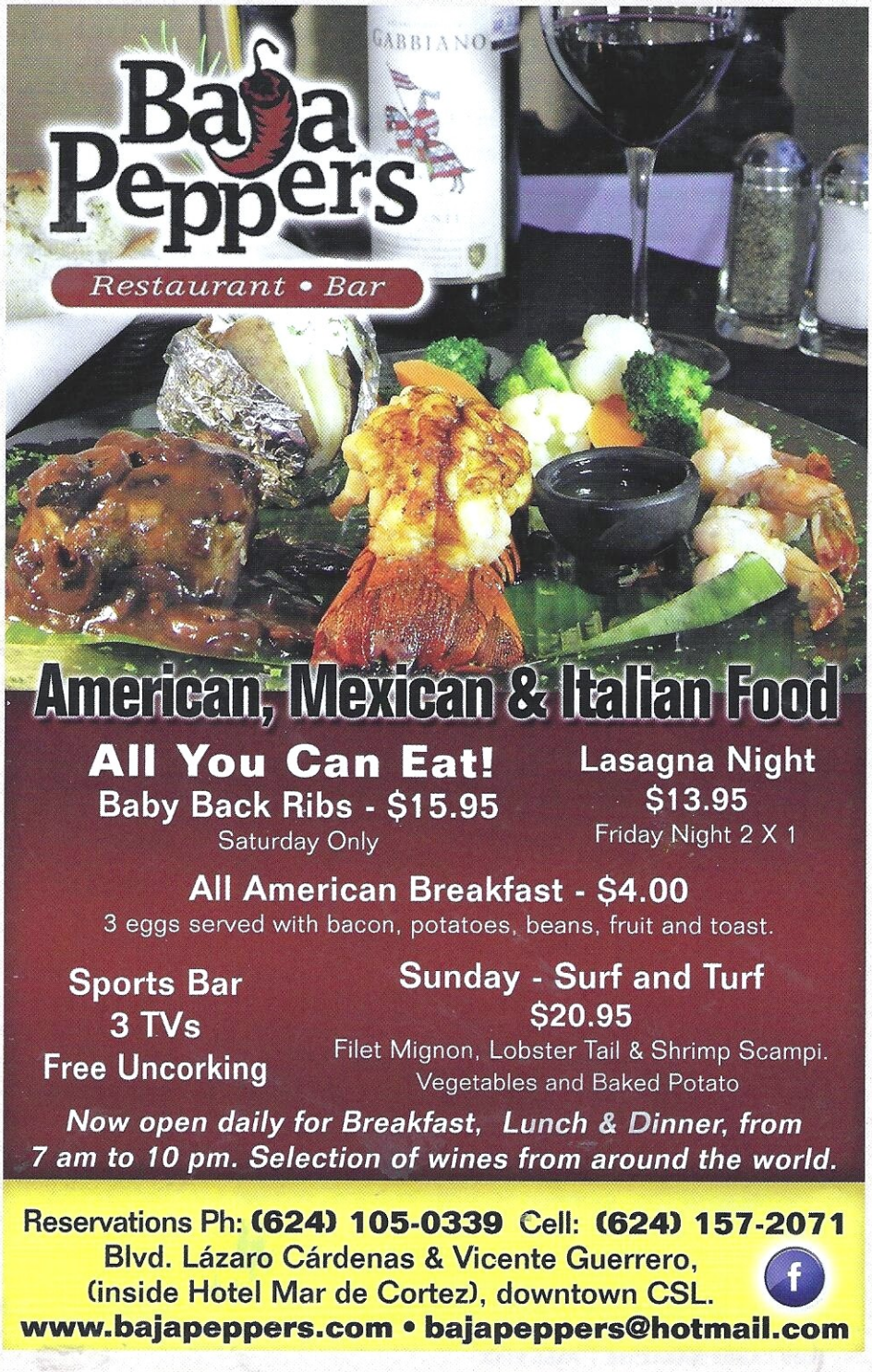


The downtown Cabo San Lucas restaurant Baja Peppers has built a loyal following on the strength of its delicious food, affordable prices, and personable customer service. Now the spot is earning even more attention for its new gourmet pizza menu.

Longtime Baja Peppers customers needn't worry. Nothing has disappeared from the robust menu. Nightly specials like the all-you-can-eat barbecue ribs are still on tap, as are steaks, seafood, and traditional Italian pastas. Now you can just add a stellar lineup of pizzas to the list.

Baja Peppers opened in the historic Hotel Mar de Cortez in 2010 to widespread acclaim, and it continues to be one of the top breakfast restaurants in Los Cabos. The $4.0 U.S. American Breakfast is perennially popular, and it includes three eggs any way you like them, bacon, potatoes, beans, toast, and fresh fruit. Other morning fare includes omelets and eggs Benedict (always a good measure of any kitchen).

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www.bajapeppers.com • bajapeppers@hotmail.com

The Alcaravea mushrooms are sautéed with white wine, extravirgin olive oil, Parmesan cheese, Marsala wine, sage, basil, and oregano and then baked.

experiences. Order a cappuccino from the adjacent Bar Esquina Coffee Bar & Take Out, which expertly crafts drinks with organic coffee beans imported directly from Oaxaca and Chiapas, México. Pair your drink with eggs Benedict or green *chilaquiles* with chicken. The combined effect of the cappuccino and the breeze that dances its way up from nearby Médano Beach is invigorating. Organic, locally sourced ingredients drive the inventive Bar Esquina menu, and that's evident in lunch items like the *ceviche*, spicy pork pizza, and curry lentil soup. For more coffee options and an express breakfast, pop right into Bar Esquina Coffee Bar & Take Out, which has a robust menu with coffee and espresso drinks, freshly baked pastries, and ModuVated Energy smoothies. Valet parking. Live music Tues–Sat. 8 p.m.–11 p.m. Bahia Hotel, Avenida El Pescador S/N, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1890, www.baresquina.com. Daily 8 a.m.–midnight. All major credit cards and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$$ A.A.

Cabo Wabo Cantina

Sammy Hagar knows there's "Only One Way to Rock," and he's been bringing his signature rocking style and impressive attention to detail to Cabo San Lucas—via the the venerable Cabo Wabo Cantina for more than a decade. The nightclub proved instrumental in the transformation of Cabo San Lucas and is now the flagship of an internationally recognized franchise. This place is good, better in fact than it has any right to be. Here you get an excellent lineup of dishes that include a hearty lobster burrito, Sammy's Tequila Shrimp (which are sautéed in garlic and serrano chile, then deglazed with lime juice and Cabo Wabo Tequila), and excellent sea scallops pan-seared, then served with red cabbage slaw and Tequila Cabo Wabo Reposado butter. Fuel up on food before heading downstairs for a night of rocking out. At either spots, you can order any of the masterful concoctions that use the restaurant's eponymous tequila line. Vicente Guerrero and Lázaro Cárdenas, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1188, www.cabowabo cantina.com. Restaurant: Daily 11 a.m.–11 p.m. Club: Nightly 8 p.m.–3 a.m. Patio bar: Daily 9 a.m.–3 a.m. All major credit cards accepted. $$–$$$$ A.A.

Captain Tony's Bar & Grill

The group that owns Captain Tony's is also the same team behind the award-winning Pisces Sportfishing, one of the largest charter fleets in all of México. It should come as no surprise, then, that its Cabo San Lucas Marina restaurant is a favorite of Los Cabos fishing enthusiasts. Captain Tony's opens early—6 a.m.!—and doesn't close its doors till 10 p.m., so you can pop in before or after your fishing adventure. The kitchen specializes in preparing anglers' catches any way they like 'em (try the tacos) for just $7 U.S. per person. It is also home to exceptional pizzas that are cooked to perfection in a wood-fired brick oven. Pair the signature Captain Tony's

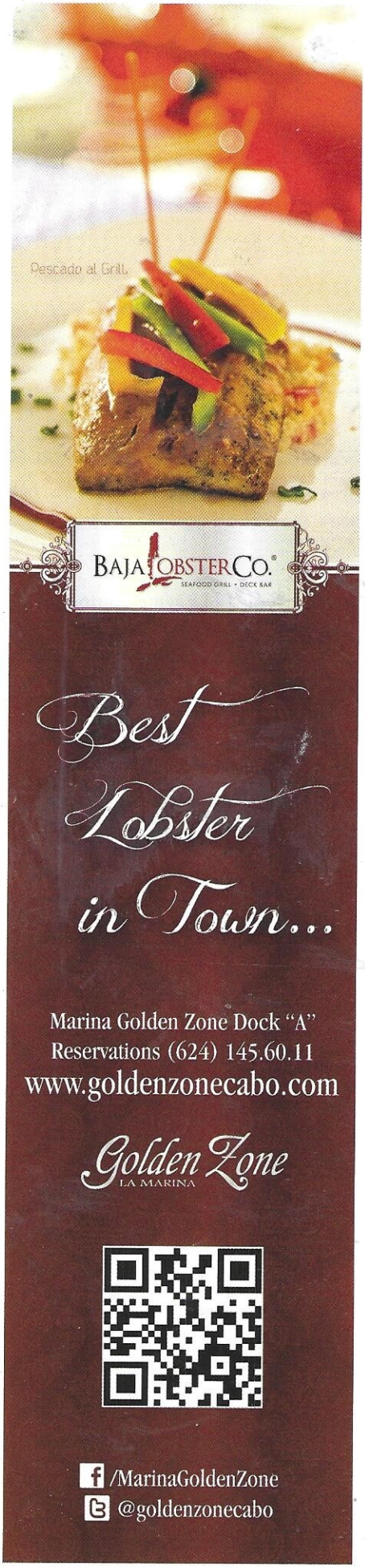
bacon-and-pizza pie with a sparkling *limonada*. Looking for just a little snack? The guacamole is made fresh at your table—and just to your liking. Well, everything here is made to our liking. Cabo San Lucas Marina, between Wyndham Los Cabos Resort and the Cabo Dolphins swim center, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-6797, www.piscesgroupcabo.com/food-fun. Daily 6 a.m.–10 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ A.A.

Francisco Estrada

Captain Tony's is known for its wood-fired pizzas and "you hook it, we cook it" promo for anglers. But you don't want to pass up the lasagna.

Casianos

The Beach Boys had Kokomo to get away from it all. But you can leave your stresses and inhibitions behind when making the much-shorter trip to Los Cabos and, more specifically, Casianos. The intimate on-site restaurant at Mar Adentro Spa & Wellness Clinic is one of a trio of eponymous restaurants by renowned Oaxacan-born chef Casiano Reyes. Each location features his signature concept: no-menu, no-rules spontaneous cuisine. When you arrive, select a three- or five-course tasting menu and decide whether you'd like wine pairings. You will also want to note any allergies or dietary restrictions. From there, the chef will prepare a meal just for you and your dinner party according to the freshest, highest-quality local ingredients available and, well, his whim. The



Francisco Estrada

Go on a gastronomic adventure at Casianos, where the spontaneous menu is decided based on the freshest, highest-quality ingredients available...and the chef's whim.

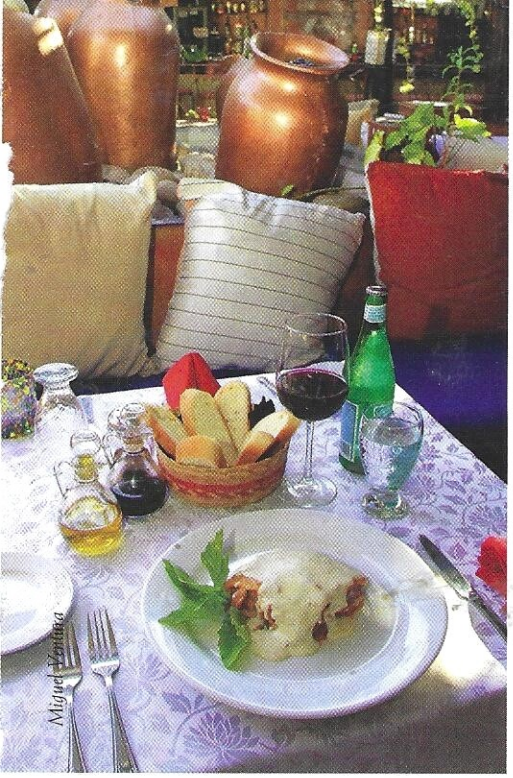
dinner will be one of a kind...and one you won't soon forget. Three-course menu is $60 U.S. plus 11 percent tax ($120 U.S. with wine paring), five-course menu is $75 U.S. plus tax ($150 with wine pairing). Camino del Colegio No. 225, Fracc. El Pedregal, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 142-5929, ventas@casianos.com, www.casianos.com. Mon.–Sat. 6 p.m.–10 p.m. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $$$–$$$$ A.A.

Cata Wine Restaurant

Looking for a romantic dinner destination? Look no farther than Cata Wine Restaurant in San José del Cabo. The space combines Italian and Mexican cuisine with soft lighting, eclectic decor, and intimate seating to set the perfect mood. Set the mood with tantalizing appetizers such as casino clams, *carpaccio de pesce*, or spinach *rotolis*, true works of art: homemade dough is rolled with spinach, ham, and three cheeses then brushed with garlic butter and baked to perfection. The entrées are just as impressive. On our night there, the penne de salmon was expertly prepared: The salmon was tender and sweet in a smoked tomato whiskey sauce. Some other Italian favorites include *lasagna nazionale* made with house-made pasta or eggplant parmigiana. If it's authentic Mexican food you're after, try the seafood-stuffed peppers "Don Cata" or the griddle shrimp, which is tender and coated with a rich spicy chipotle sauce and served with a tower of marinated nopales, or cactus, and *panela* cheese. To complement your blissful evening of fine dining and intimate romance, the staff at Cata Wine is not only attentive, and friendly, but entertaining and quite talented as well. Just ask for their famous "Mexican flaming coffee." You will be delighted by the veritable tableside dinner show, and the best thing of all; for the encore you get to enjoy your delicious "coffee." Beware, this is not to be mistaken for coffee in the traditional sense, this liquid confection is, in part, tantalizing liquors and other spirits. Blvd. Mijares & Paseo Finisterra Plaza Mision, San Jose del Cabo, (624) 142-0868. Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.–10:30 p.m. through September. MasterCard, Visa and vouchers accepted. $–$$ W.A.

Chamuyo

Good restaurants provide you with a delicious meal and a memorable experience. Excellent restaurants transport you. Chamuyo (it's pronounced "shamoshow") sends you on a culinary adventure through Buenos Aires dance halls and the verdant Pampas. Bring the appetite of a gaucho to this moonlit Argentine grill, where you'll dine on monster 22-ounce beef ribs that chef Marcelo Romby—a talented Argentine import—slow cooks for

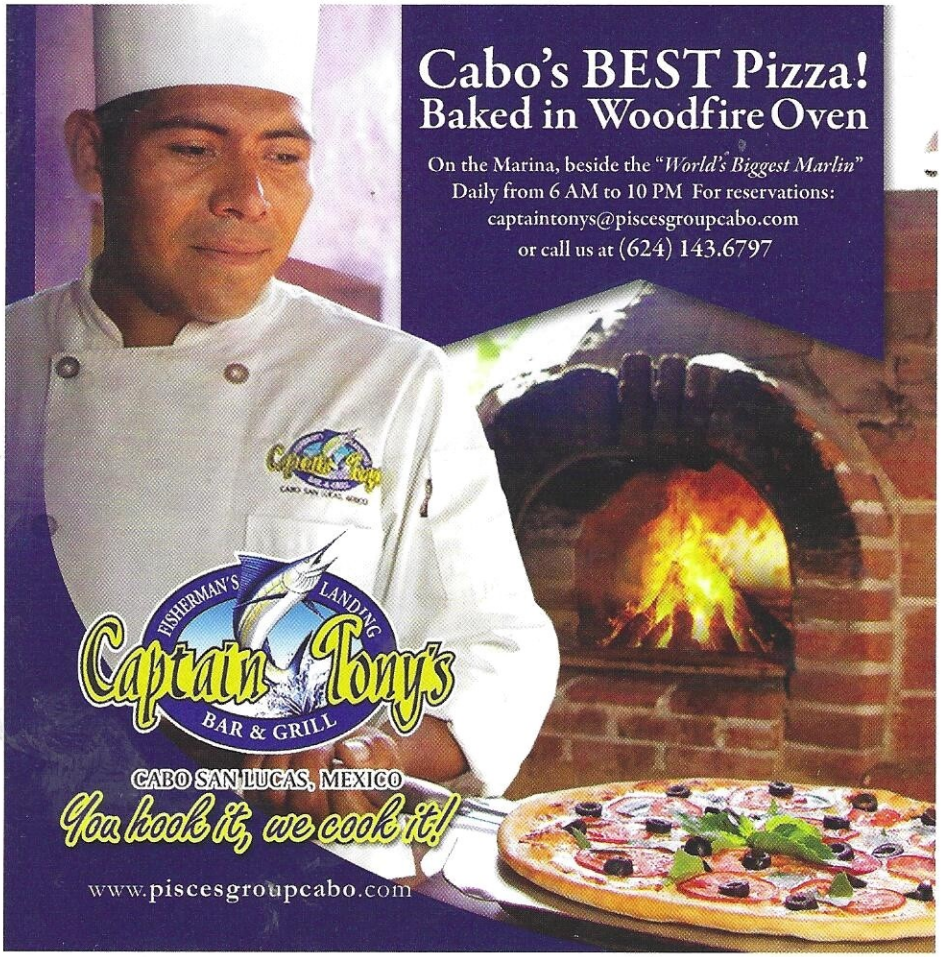


The decor perfectly blends the romantic and the eclectic, while Cata Wine's menu is 100 percent delicious.

more than four hours. Meat-stuffed empanadas come fried or oven baked, and they serve as excellent starters. For a surefire excellent meal, opt for the dinner for two. It includes beef rib, sausage, rib eye, salad, and a bottle of wine for $68 U.S.; the dinner for four is $129 U.S. There are also wood-fired pizzas, fish, homemade pasta, Argentine sausage served with salad, and Milanesa sandwiches. End with bread pudding, flan, or Argentine crepes made with seasonal fruit. Paseo del Pescador at Acuario, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-4900, www.loscabosguide.com/chamuyo restaurant/index.html. Nightly 5 p.m.–midnight. All major credit cards and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$$ A.A.

De Cortez Grill & Restaurant

This is one of the most beautiful settings in Los Cabos to enjoy the magnificent view of the Sea of Cortés, catch a brilliant sunset, or fantasize under a magical full moon. You can now do so with a redesigned mesquite grill-driven menu by new executive chef Manuel De Luca. Want to taste it all? Share the mixed grill of lobster, shrimp, jumbo scallops, flank steak, and lamb chops. If possible, save room for dessert. The menu features a variety of outstanding concoctions including the white chocolate with raspberries, and they all would provide a perfect ending to a perfect evening. All vegetables are organic and grown at nearby farms, personally selected by the chef. Live music Wednesday through Saturday. Sheraton Hacienda del Mar, km 10 on the Tourist Corridor, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-8000, ext. 4087. Nightly 5 p.m.–10:30 p.m. All major credit cards and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$$ S.B.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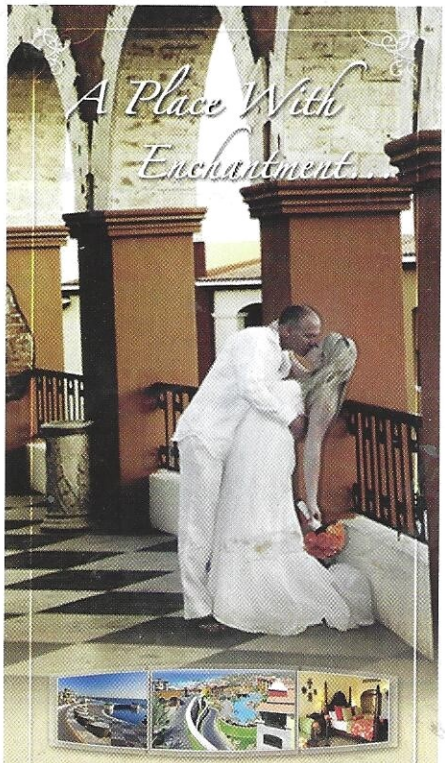
Dos Mares Marina Grill & Bar

Since opening on the Cabo San Lucas Marina in December, the stylish Dos Mares Marina Grill & Bar has made quite an impression. The location is picture perfect: Take in romantic views of the gleaming water, polished yachts, and pretty people who stroll the walkway. Mediterranean menu items pop; there's seafood, pastas, gourmet pizzas, and steaks. The food is every bit the equal of the views. If you're coming for dinner, start with the tuna sashimi, an excellent example of chef Juan Manuel Sánchez's creative approach to contemporary Mediterranean-style cuisine. This succulent appetizer matches traditional accents like fennel and goat cheese with the zesty tang of fresh orange, a tropical flavor burst that infuses an old standard with new vitality. Bold and unexpected combinations are Sánchez's stock and trade, and his pairings of seemingly incongruous ingredients produce some spectacular results. Continue on your culinary journey with the creamy portobello mushroom soup or a signature smoked salad topped with *guajillo* vinaigrette, then tuck into exquisitely crafted entrées like the



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Francisco Estrada

At De Cortez, enjoy views of the Sea of Cortés and catch a brilliant sunset.

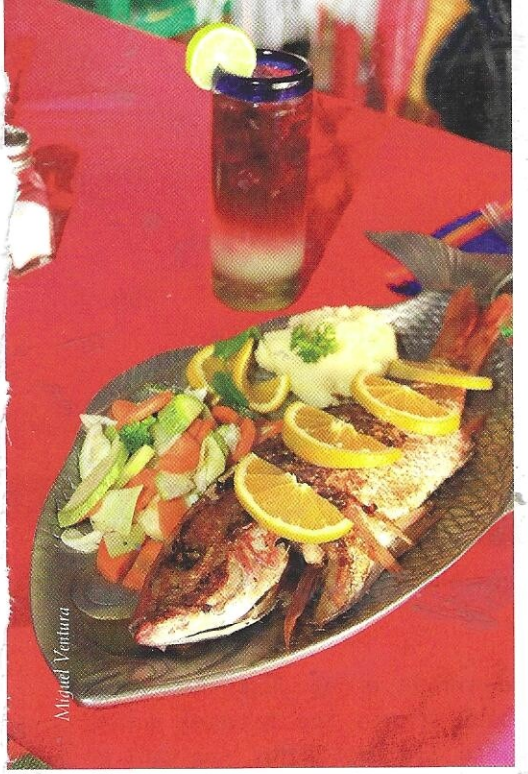
filet mignon in port sauce with mushrooms, zucchini, and caramelized shallots. The fresh catch of the day is also a superb choice, particularly when served bathed in the chef's heavenly pink sauce. Afterwards, don't even think about skipping dessert. Given Dos Mares' decadent selection of sweet tooth–pleasing platters, your taste buds will never forgive you. And don't worry about mal de mer when the bill arrives. The prices are just as perfect as everything else at this chic waterfront eatery. Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-0582, www.dosmarescabo.com. Daily 11 a.m.–11 p.m. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ C.S.

El Coral

There is something inexplicably appealing and comforting about the wafting aroma of a mesquite grill. Perhaps that is part of what has kept El Coral—Cabo San Lucas's oldest still-operating restaurant—in business for all these years. The kitchen churns out traditional Mexican and fresh local seafood specialities, while the space oozes old-fashioned charm. There are colorful murals and festive furnishings as well as photos of Cabo from way-back-when. The grilled red snapper, served with mashed potatoes and mixed vegetables, is perhaps the most popular dish, but the barbecue pork ribs, lobster tail, and giant wet burrito with pork and *chile colorado* sauce also have their enthusiasts. In addition to comfort food staples like nachos, tacos, and enchiladas, the menu features steaks and seafood as well as kid-friendly options. The Bartender's Margarita—made with Hornitos tequila, Cointreau, and cranberry juice—is a personal favorite. For dessert, sample the flan and signature flaming coffee cocktails. Boulevard Marina and Miguel Hidalgo, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-0150. Daily noon to 10 p.m. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ C.S.

Guaycura Boutique Hotel & Spa

While you visit the *"pueblo mágico,"* or "magical village," Todo Santos, don't leave the boutique hotel Guaycura off your list of must-see places and experiences. The beautifully appointed Guaycura (Y-KOO-RA) Boutique Hotel & Spa, which is located about one hour north of Cabo San Lucas, offers lush accommodations as well as a variety of services, including massages and on-site gourmet restaurant. The building is perfectly situated for catching the best views in town and was



Whole red snapper is a Mexican delicacy, and you can try it for yourself at El Coral.

originally built in the 19th century. Its history is unique and colorful. This skillfully renovated space is in the heart of Todos Santos and has served as a post office, a police station, and even an art academy for young women, among other things. The restaurant offers fine traditional Mediterranean cuisine enhanced with unique Mexican flavors. The menu lists choices expertly crafted from locally sourced ingredients; try the grilled octopus, or simply enjoy the extraordinary fresh breads and rolls prepared daily. The *sopa de mariscos*, or seafood soup, is light and fresh. For the main entrée, we suggest the New Zealand roasted lamb rack in mint essence or the prime rib—always a favorite. Duo of the sea with its jumbo shrimp and scallops in a creamy rich three chili sauce is succulent and done to perfection. To finish in style, opt for the lava brownie, artfully presented with lime sorbet and a strawberry, or simply enjoy the best cup of coffee in Southern Baja; it is rich, dark, and topped with creamy foam. At the corner of Legaspi and Topete, Todos Santos, (612) 175-0800, www.guaycura.com.mx. Daily 7a.m.–11 p.m. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa and vouchers accepted. $–$$ W.A.

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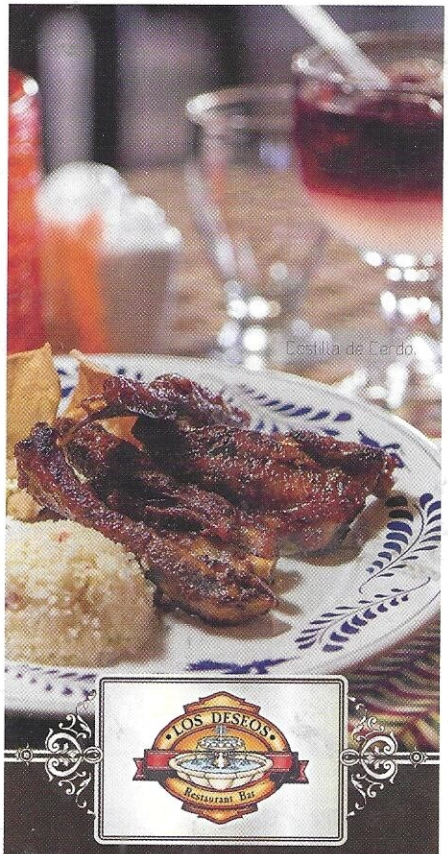
Hacienda El Coyote Restaurant & Tequila Lounge

You would expect that any restaurant that puts "tequila" in its name would skew toward an adults-only clientele, but the atmosphere at Hacienda El Coyote is decidedly family friendly—and effortlessly sophisticated. Think of it as what you would experience while dining at the elegantly appointed house of a dear friend...in México. The attentive service and well executed menu make for an always-enjoyable experience. There's a gorgeous *palapa*, as well as patio dining and an indoor air-conditioned dining space. Chef Sergio Jimenez expertly prepares traditional Mexican specialties like *cuitlacoche*, tacos, tamales, and enchiladas, as well as chicken *en mole*. Fresh fish and seafood is available, including Azteca



Francisco Estrada

Start your dinner at Hacienda El Coyote with some aguachile, *a yummy, spicy shrimp appetizer.*

shrimp sautéed in chipotle lime and tequila sauce and lobster crepes with goat cheese, squash blossoms and roasted tomatillo cream sauce. Another heartier option is beef tenderloin roasted with agave and served with chocolate-*chile guajillo* coffee sauce and mashed potatoes. Finish your evening on a high note, with a traditional Mexican dessert of churros (sugar-coated donuts) you can dip into melted chocolate. Children are welcome at Hacienda el Coyote; there is even a special menu and play area. Valet parking. Cabo San Lucas Street and Marina Boulevard, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 146-7776, www.haciendaelcoyote.com. Nightly 4 p.m.–midnight. All major credit cards and vouchers. $$–$$$ S.B.

Imomo Sushi

To visit México without sampling some of its traditional cuisine would be a sin, but you'd be equally remiss should you leave without having explored Los Cabos' vibrant sushi scene. Despite the thousands of miles that separate Cabo from Tokyo, the two seem intrinsically, culinarily connected. Rich seas propel the art of sushi forward in both cities, and patrons here in Los Cabos reap the benefits. Imomo Sushi House is a cozy den on the Cabo San Lucas Marina that's brought to life with its bold red-and-white decor and a menu that ranges from safe, kid-friendly sushi to downright daring. Begin with spicy baby octopus and a mixed sashimi salad. On cool nights, you can't go wrong with an udon or wanton soup. For a taste of Mexican sushi (by that, we mean the inclusion of cream cheese), opt for the Mexico Roll or Philadelphia Roll. Our favorite is the Volcano Avocado Hot, a baked roll topped with spicy shrimp and eel sauce. Marina Golden Zone, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-6011, www.goldenzonecabo.com. Major credit cards and vouchers accepted. Daily 7 a.m–11 p.m. $–$$ A.A.

Jack's Bar & Grill

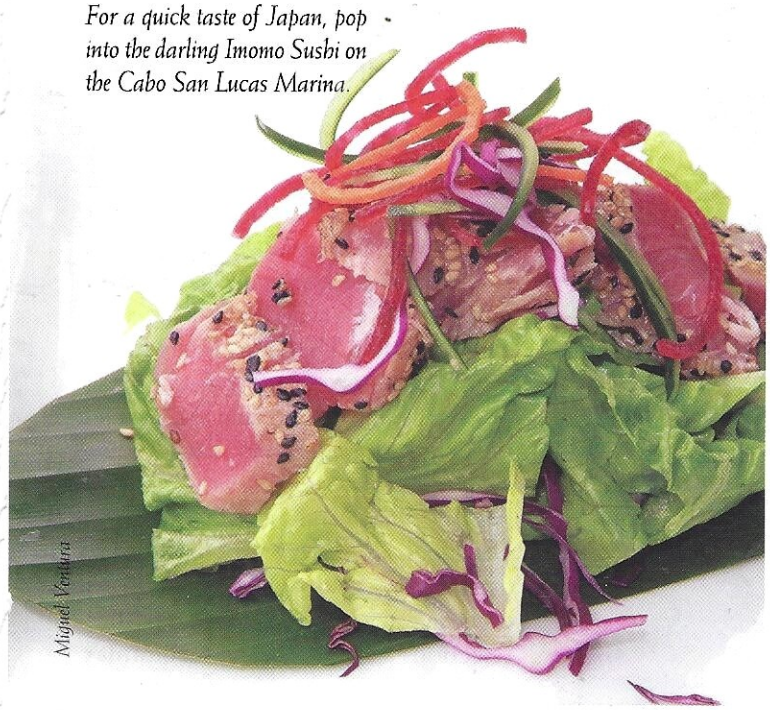
Who knew Captain Jack was a gourmand? If you weren't already clued in, you can figure it out by visiting the silly yet somehow sophisticated Jack's Bar & Grill on the Cabo San Lucas Marina. The restaurant and bar is a treasure. Enter its front doors, and you're transported to the Black Pearl. A gregarious pirate Jack greets and chats with patrons who then peruse a menu that combines the must-haves (nachos and fried calimari, natch) plenty of kid-approved fare like tacos and enchiladas, and several revelations, including the Azteca beef fillet stuffed with cheese, onion, and poblano pepper slices then served with a chipotle sauce. Perhaps the best dish, though, is the hot shrimp spiced with garlic, onion, soy sauce,

and peppers, then topped with avocado. Marina Golden Zone, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-6011, www.goldenzonecabo.com. Major credit cards and vouchers accepted. Daily 7 a.m–11 p.m. $–$$ A.A.

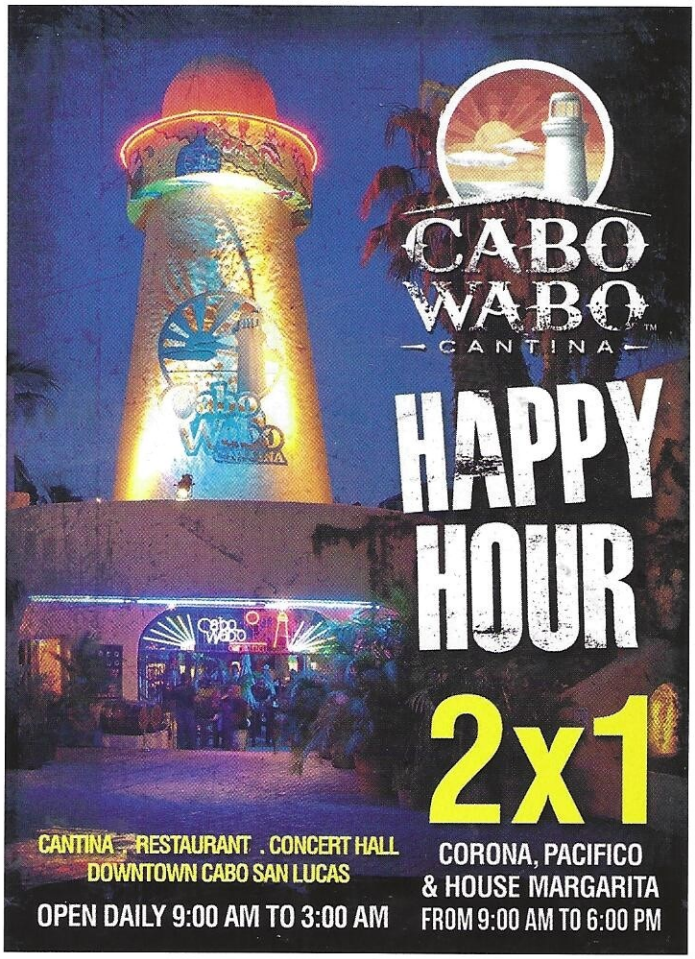
Jazmin's Restaraunt

Entering through the doors of Jazmin's is like stepping back into México's vibrant history. The walls are made of rustic red bricks, and the tables and chairs are crafted and painted in eye-catching enamel colors. The walls are a veritable shrine to Pancho Villa and heroes of the Mexican Revolution. The exhibition kitchen, though, is anything but a museum piece. Guests can watch—and inhale the kitchen's rich aromas—from the shade of the canvas-covered patio as the chef busily works his magic. Before the Jazmin's-style scallop appetizer arrived, I could hear the sizzle and almost "taste" the sweet onions, basil, butter, and scallops sautéing. The flavor is the perfect marriage of sweet and savory. Jazmin's specialty pairs sweet, starchy fried bananas with a succulent and spicy seafood–stuffed chicken breast. This dish joins the rich savory flavors from the sea with the sweet abundance from the land. The mosaic of tastes is brought to life under a creamy blanket of chipotle sauce. To complete a perfect meal, try the flan. It's remarkable, and I say this as an indi-

For a quick taste of Japan, pop into the darling Imomo Sushi on the Cabo San Lucas Marina.



Miguel Vendrell



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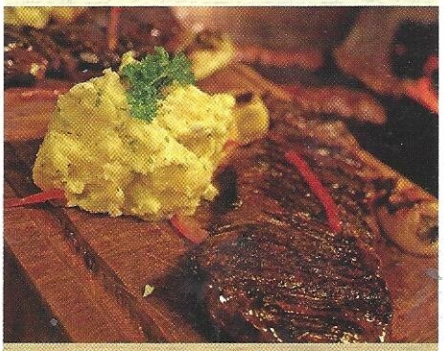

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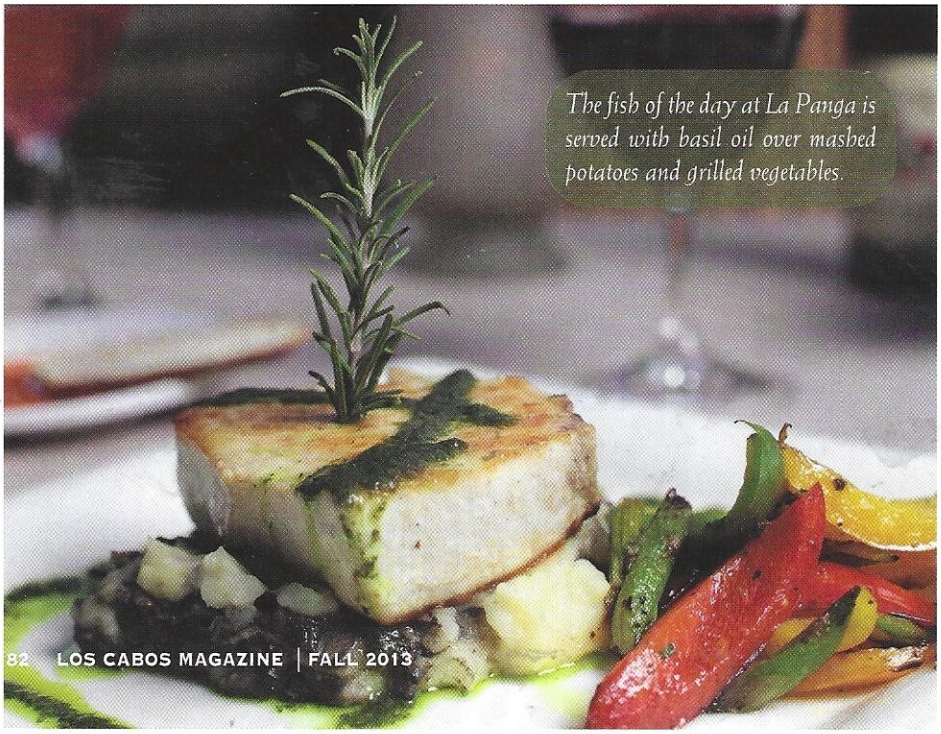
vidual who is not normally a big fan of flan. The custard is firm and eggy, with just the right amount of sugar and a nice, rich caramelized top. Morelos between Zaragoza and Obregón, San José del Cabo, (624) 142-1760. Daily 8 a.m.–11p.m. MasterCard, Visa and vouchers accepted. $–$$ W.A.

Miguel Ventura

Who knew Captain Jack was a gourmand? The pirate-themed Jack's Bar & Grill offers both a robust menu and pretty views of the marina.

La Panga Antigua Restaurant & Bar

Every morning in Los Cabos, fishermen venture into the waters of the Cabo San Lucas Bay in little skiffs that are known in this region of México as *pangas*. At La Panga Antigua Restaurant & Bar in San José del Cabo, chef-owner Jacobo Turquie celebrates the tradition with a locally sourced, seafood-rich menu of contemporary Mexican cuisine. The tuna-and-avocado tartar with cilantro oil and a chilled seafood medley prepared with basil oil are perfect examples. The seafood bisque is crafted using a blend of spices, making each bite even better than the last. The popular seared North Pacific butterfish is served with a creamy risotto. There is a sophisticated wine selection. For dessert, order the molten lava cake, which exceeds all expectations. Come early for the recently launched lunch service to enjoy a three-course meal starting at around $20 U.S. Choose from options such as an organic field green salad mixed in a roasted cherry tomato vinaigrette, chilled gazpacho, chicken enchiladas in a *mole* sauce, and skirt steak fajitas accompanied by flour tortillas. Zaragoza No. 20, San José del Cabo, (624) 142-4041, www.lapanga.com. Daily noon–10:30 p.m. All major credit cards accepted. $$$ L.G.



The fish of the day at La Panga is served with basil oil over mashed potatoes and grilled vegetables.

Carlos Aboyo

Las Marías

Hacienda Encantada's on-site restaurant, Las Marías, specializes in gourmet Mexican cuisine, including breakfast favorites such as *chilaquiles* and huevos rancheros and dinnertime delicacies like Acapulco-style *ceviche*, enchiladas, and chiles rellenos. The menu offers something to please every palate. Steak lovers will enjoy prime cuts like the filet mignon with mushroom sauce, while vegetarians may sample a variety of healthy salads and rich pasta dishes. Decadent desserts and children's options are also available, and the expansive wine list features some fine selections from Baja California's

Carlos Aboyo

The oyster sampler at Lorenzillo's features the chef's favorite preparations.

Guadalupe Valley, as well as quality bottles from Argentina, Chile, and the United States. A menu showcasing delicious dishes from the restaurant's new mesquite grill debuted in January; so did additional terrace seating overlooking the Sea of Cortés. Las Marías is not open for lunch. Hacienda Encantada, km 7.5 on the Tourist Corridor, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 163-5555, www.haciendaencantada.com. Daily 7 a.m.–noon, 5 p.m.–11 p.m. All major credit cards and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$ C.S.

Lorenzillo's

There is a wonderfully nostalgic vibe that envelops Lorenzillo's, the live lobster house on the Cabo San Lucas Marina. But don't you dare write the nautical-themed restaurant as a mere throwback, a vestige of days gone by. This place is an institution. Chef José Santiago has crafted a robust menu worthy of the finest captain's table (a scene invoked by the interior's caramel-colored wood paneling and repurposed ship pieces). There are several preparations of lobster. You can never go wrong with Thermidor, but be brave and try one of the less-traditional sauces. Appetizers include crab legs, soft-shelled crab, a Caesar salad made tableside, and even abalone carpaccio. But I'm partial to the exceptional oyster sampler (featuring the chef's favorite preparations), especially when enjoyed in the downstairs, more relaxed Oyster Bar. The cantilevered deck is in the heart of the marina and ideal for people watching. Boulevard Lázaro Cárdenas, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 105-0212, www.lorenzillos.com.mx. Restaurant: Daily noon–11 p.m. Oyster Bar: Daily 11 a.m.–11 p.m. All major credit cards and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$$ A.A.

Los Barriles

The Cabo San Lucas dining scene is brimming with options. There are so many quality restaurants, in fact, that new additions can easily feel redundant. Such was never the case, though, with Los Barriles, a Mexican-Asian fusion eatery that introduced Korean barbecue to Cabo San Lucas. The menu also features traditional and fusion dishes from Thailand, Vietnam, and Japan. Highlights include the Cevichimi Barril Style appetizer, a generous helping of thinly sliced tuna in a lemon soy sauce with fresh serrano chiles, onions, and avocado. The superb Hot Pot Thai Seafood features shrimp, scallops, and calamari prepared in a coconut milk and a ginger

Miguel Ventura

Los Deseos' name translates to "the desires," and its menu is like a manifestation of its name.

garlic lemongrass broth. The decadent VIP Combination for Two includes such choices as filet mignon, lobster tail, shrimp, octopus, and sea bass. Los Barriles has wood furnishings, evocative murals, and a romantically lit dining area festooned with lanterns and strung lights. Its staff is smart and friendly—each guest is greeted by the ringing of a bell and applause from fellow diners—and offers detail-oriented service: Servers prepare soups, salads, and Korean barbecue tableside. Two-for-one margaritas are a big draw at the beautiful old L-shaped bar (8 a.m.–5 p.m. daily), and a mariachi band strolls through the restaurant on weekends. Calle Miguel Hidalgo, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1619, www.losbarrilesrestaurantbar.com. Daily 8 a.m.–11 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ C.S.

Los Deseos

If there is a better *queso fundido* in all of Los Cabos, I am yet to find it. The traditional melted cheese appetizer is here made with three cheeses flamed table side in a volcanic rock, then doused with tequila and served alongside handmade tortillas. The queso fundido is a decadent start to a meal that is guaranteed to please on multiple levels. The restaurant's name translates to "the desires," and its menu is like a manifestation of its name. The Tikin Xic is a Yucatecan-style fish fillet with achiote sauce wrapped in a banana leaf. The Aztec Huarache steak is a finely cut fillet with green *chilaquiles* and salsa on cactus leaves. And the *jericalla* is a Jalisco-style dessert that falls somewhere in between between crème brûlée and flan. Looking for a less decadent option? The nopales (cactus) salad with tomato, cilantro, olives, serrano chile, and *panela* cheese is a wonderful, light alternative. Marina Golden Zone, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-6011, www.marinagoldenzone.com. Daily 7 a.m.–11 p.m. All major credit cards and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ A.A.

Madeira Bistro

Toss your travel guides and TripAdvisor printouts. Your Los Cabos itinerary is incomplete if it does not include a visit to Madeira Bistro, a Brazilian steakhouse that wows with its *rodízio*-style skewers of meat and unbeatable prices. For just $22 U.S., you are treated to all-you-can-eat dinners that start with wonderfully garlicky bread, whipped mashed potatoes, rice, purple cabbage slaw, and chicken wings. Servers walk table to table with skewers of top sirloin, rib eyes, barbecued ribs, chorizo sausage, *arrachera*, and New York steak. Save room for the sweet and crispy fried banana dessert. Even sweeter news: Madeira participates in the *Los Cabos Magazine* Prepaid Voucher Program, which are often available for 50 percent off. That means the decadent all-you-can-eat dinner is but $11 U.S. Intersection of Calle Vicente Guerrero and Francisco I. Madero (a half block from Cabo Wabo), Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-0273. Daily 9 a.m.–2 p.m., 4 p.m.–11 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$ A.A.

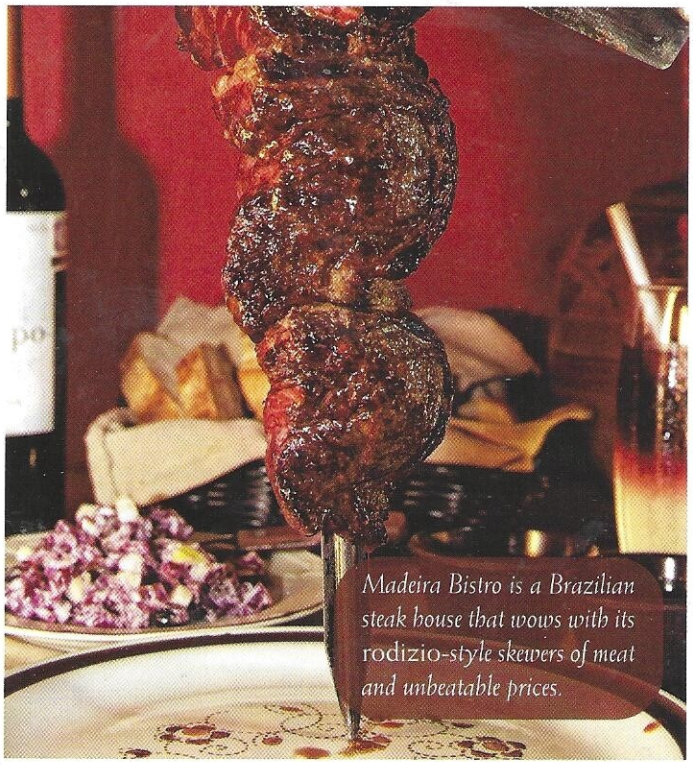
Mango Cantina

This sports bar and restaurant on the Cabo San Lucas Marina was recently awarded the prestigious Distintivo M, a sought-after government certification identifying model, modern businesses with consistently superior quality control. There is no doubt Mango Cantina is one of the best spots on the marina for sports lovers, especially given the 17 HD TVs and one 180-inch screen constantly playing international games and events (don't miss a single NFL, NHL, boxing, MLB, UFC, NASCAR, or NBA game). It's also a top stop for traditional Mexican fare and fresh local seafood; the sports-themed menu loaded with delicious options. Start with raw Knockout Shrimp or a Nascar Salad, sample Heisman Tacos, Touchdown and Super Bowl burgers, and Yankees Chicken, or dig into a collection of combo platters that allow you to

mix and match comfort food favorites like Angus flank steak, barbecue baby back ribs, chicken breast, shrimp, and fish filets. The Hole in One lobster is also a popular choice, served with butter, baked potato, and vegetables. Sweet meal cappers include a selection of cakes, ice creams, and homemade brownies. The Cabo San Lucas Marina location overlooks Puerto Paraiso, Luxury Avenue, and the fishing fleet, and its kitchen is always prepared to cook up the hard-fought catches of visiting anglers in a variety of tasty styles. Gourmet espresso coffee drinks are also available, and Mango Cantina offers daily two-for-one beer specials. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-3012, www.mangocantina.com. Mon–Fri. 8 a.m.–11 p.m., Sat.–Sun. 8 a.m.–midnight. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ C.S.

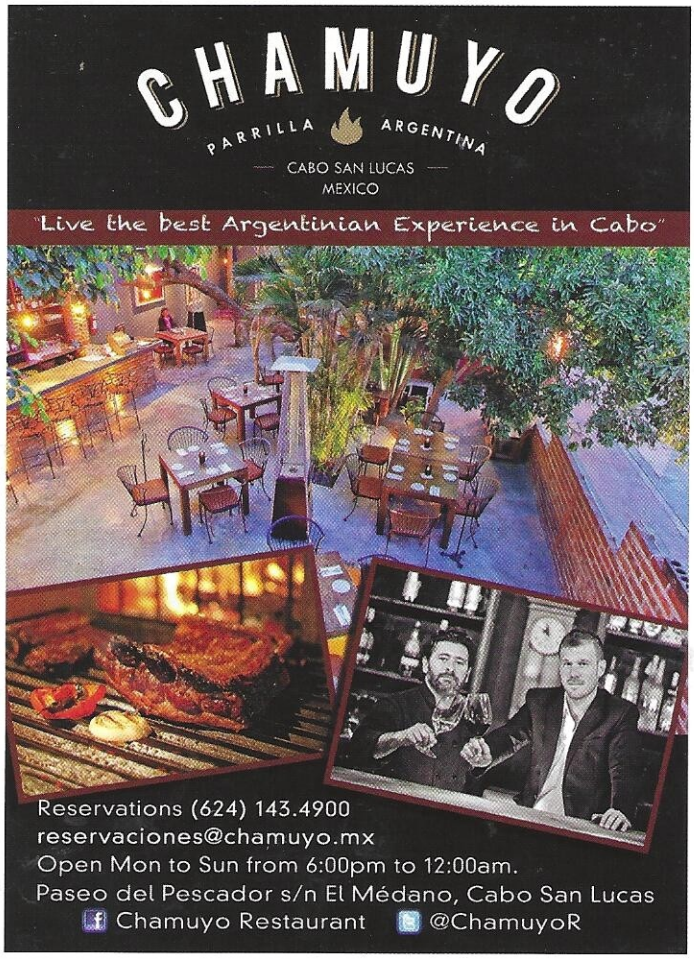
Mango Deck

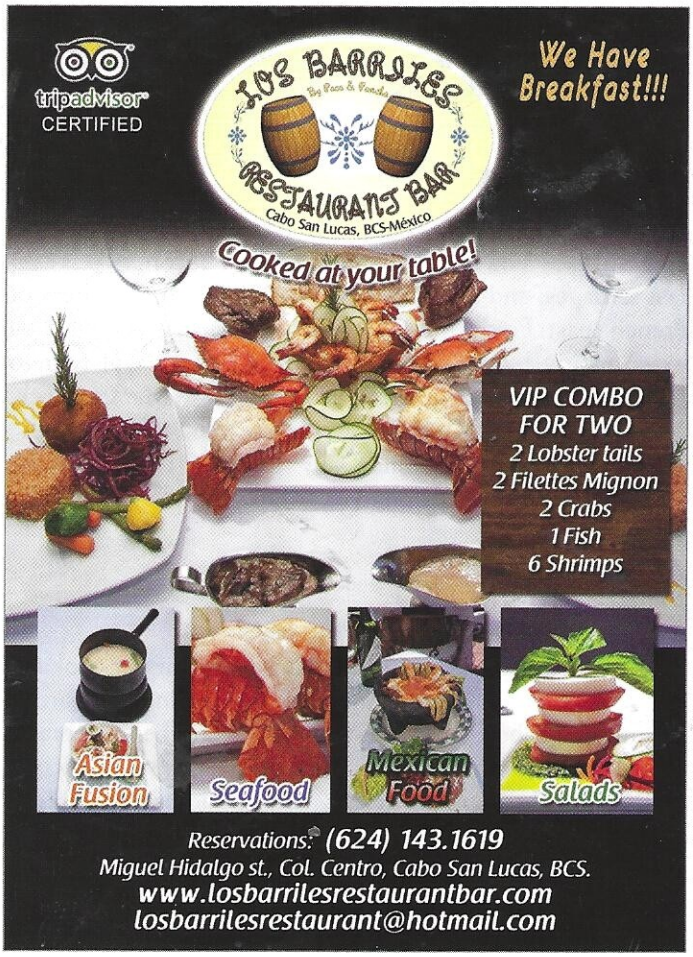
An enviable location on Médano Beach. A bar that opens before many travelers even wakw up. And a menu that could please the pickiest eater. What's not to love about Mango

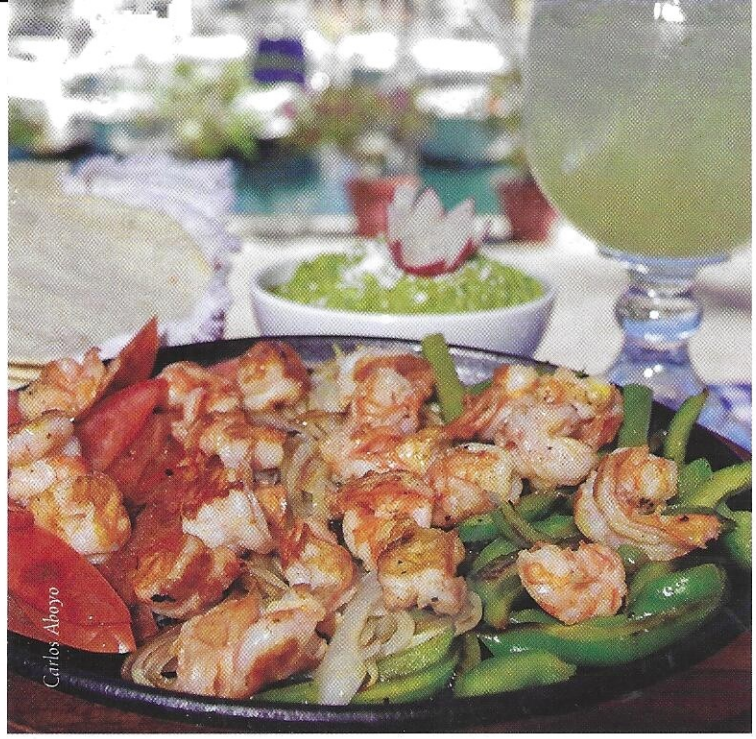


Gilda Badillo

Madeira Bistro is a Brazilian steak house that wows with its rodizio-style skewers of meat and unbeatable prices.






Carlos Aboyo

Mango Cantina's grilled shrimp, a margarita, and a view of the Cabo San Lucas Marina? Can't get better than this.

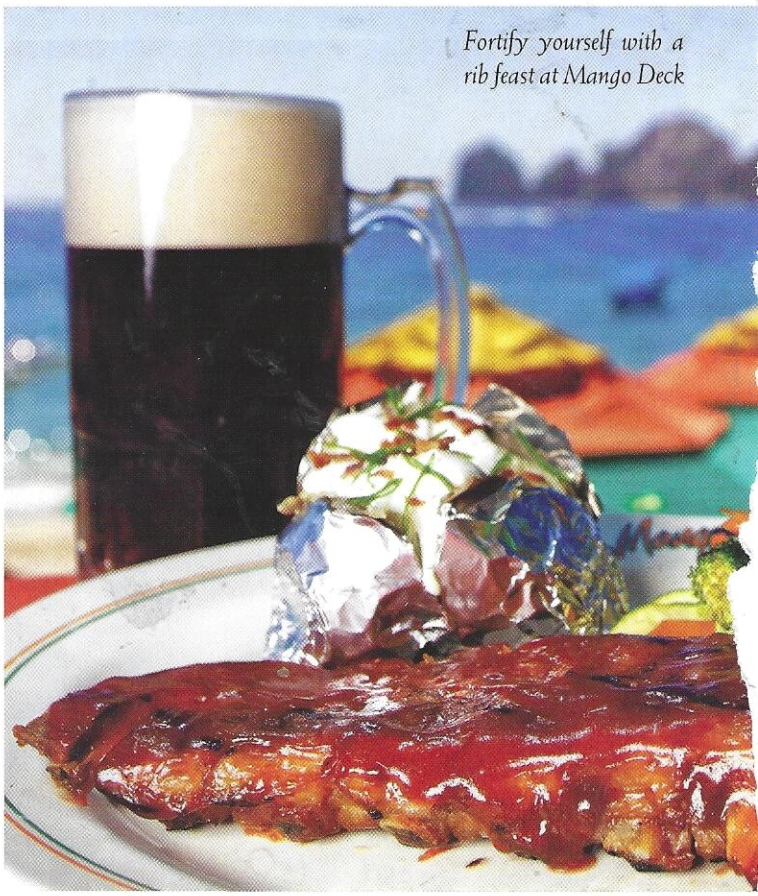
Deck? Whatever you're in the mood for, Mango Deck has it: from fresh seafood and sushi to traditional Mexican dishes and grilled specialties like the delicious barbecued baby back ribs. Despite all the lunch and dinner delights, morning is still my favorite time to visit Mango Deck. The Cabo San Lucas Bay comes to life with *pangas*, yachts, and kayaks, and Médano Beach is a sea of lounge chairs and colorful umbrellas. This is the perfect place to start your day. Stop in for Sunday's all-you-can-eat buffet brunch, or drop in daily for hearty fare like steak and eggs and the renowned Mexican hangover cure: *chilaquiles*. My go-to is the Two, Two, Two, which I like to call the "Noah's Ark." You get two eggs any way you like them, two strips of bacon, two breakfast sausages, and a choice of two pancakes or two slices of French toast. Fresh fruit is also included, and if you need an extra energy burst, skip the coffee and try one of Mango Deck's fresh-squeezed juices or smoothies. Mango Deck, Médano Beach, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-0901, www.mangodeckcabo.com. Daily 8 a.m.–11 p.m. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ C.S.

María Corona

There is nothing like a grandmother's love...or her cooking. At María Corona, an enchanting restaurant in the heart of downtown Cabo San Lucas, the capable kitchen celebrates traditional Mexican cuisine and relies heavily on recipes crafted by the owner's México City grandmother. This is classic Mexican at its best, presented within the dining hall (covered by an impressive *palapa*) or outdoors: The tree-shaded patio, its twinkling lights, and wafting music conjure Old México. The signature cactus margarita is one of a kind, and the perfect way to begin your alfresco dinner. There are several items prepared tableside; try them all. The *queso fundido* (freshly prepared melted cheese with chorizo, corn, epazote, and mushrooms) is a fiery show and delectable appetizer. The guacamole is quite possibly the best in Los Cabos. For an only-in-México experience, order the *chamorro de cerdo* (pork shank), *cochinita pibil*, or shrimp in sweet-'n'-spicy *mole*. Save room for the homestyle desserts. But note: While flan is ubiquitous on many a menu in México, it is rarely so well executed as at María Corona. Live music Mon–Sat. Free Wi-Fi. 16 de Septiembre (between Morelos and Leona Vicario), Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1111, www.bajacantinagroup.com. Daily noon–midnight. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ A.A.

Mariscos Mocambo

The chocolate clams—named for their color, not their flavor—at Mariscos Mocambo were the inspiration for this issue's "Quintessential Cabo," page 64. The article highlights the city's absolute-must-have dishes, and these large brown clams (a regional speciality) top the list. They are not, however, all you'll want to sample while at this Veracruz-style seafood spot. It's a favorite of locals—and for good reason. Mocambos' chefs make the most of the abundant waters that


Carlos Aboyo

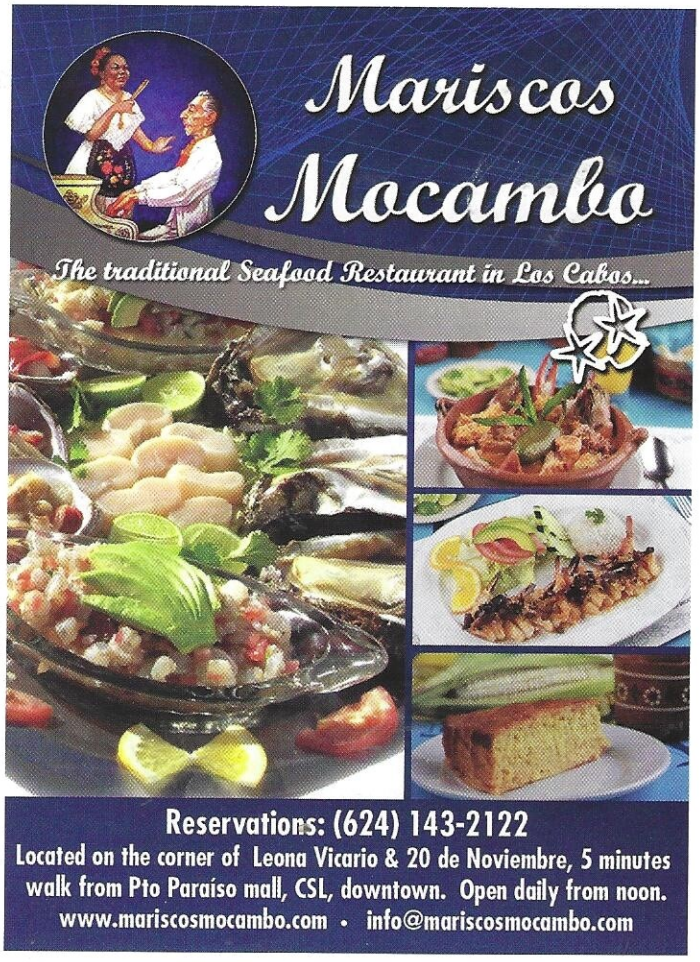
Fortify yourself with a rib feast at Mango Deck

María Corona celebrates México's culinary traditions...and presentations.

line the peninsula. There are locally sourced dishes like spicy *camarón aguachile* (shrimp with serrano chile and lime), *chilpachole de jaiba* (crab soup with a touch of chipotle and epazote), and shrimp *ceviche*. You could fill up on starters, but you'll want to save room for plates like the *pulpo en su tinta* (octopus in its ink), which is prepared here with white rice, onion, and jalapeño. Leona Vicario and 20 de Noviembre, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-2122, www.mariscosmocambo.com. Daily Noon–10 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ A.A.

Mi Casa

The name translates to "My Home," and Mi Casa could not be any more appropriately named. Guests here are greeted as warmly as family. The garden setting is picturesque and fragrant with the scent of flowers and lemon trees. Softly cooing doves provide a melodic soundtrack for a truly cultural dining experience. The 15-item-long appetizer menu has something for everyone, including vegetarian options. Try the *ceviche costeño campechano*, which comes loaded with scallops, shrimp, and octopus in this zesty tomato-lime cocktail, or the tamales surtidos, a sampler of regional tamales. Mi Casa provides a feast for the taste buds and the eyes: Artwork adorns the walls. It may appear as if Frida Kahlo herself had chosen the arrangements. The artwork—like the cuisine—has been handpicked from every region of México to represent the diversity and beauty of this land and its people. Here, the *chile en nogada* is teeming not only with flavor but also with tradition. The not-only-for-Independence-Day fare features a huge poblano pepper stuffed with meats, seeds, and dried fruit, then topped with a creamy cherry sauce and garnished with pomegranate; it's an experience in itself. The tortilla soup, one of Mi Casa's most-famous dishes, is always a popular choice. To com-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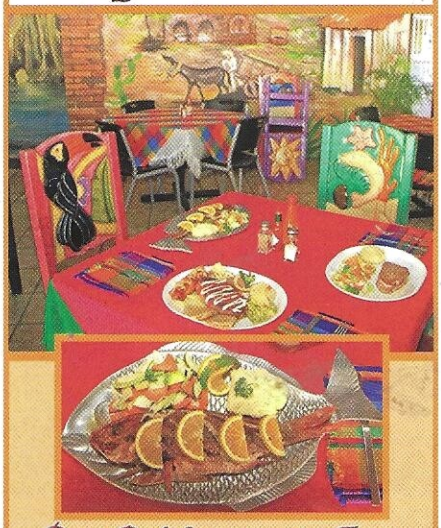
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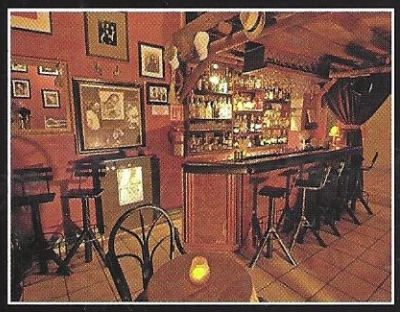
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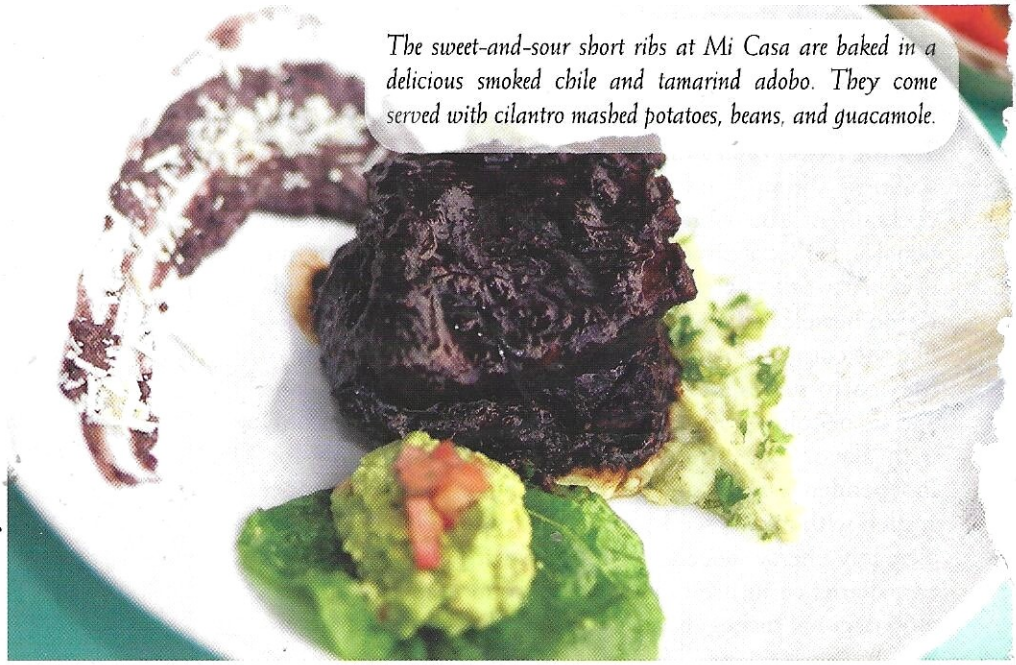
plete the experience, order some homemade mango ice cream infused with tequila; now that's México! Alvaro Obregon 19, San José del Cabo, (624) 146-9263, www.micasa restaurant.com.mx. Also located in Cabo San Lucas: Avenida Cabo San Lucas S/N, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-8245, www.micasarestaurant .com.mx. Mon.–Sat. 11:30 a.m.–3 p.m., 5:30 p.m.–10:30 p.m.; Sun. 5:30 p.m.–10:30.p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$ W.A.

Mis Sueños Restaurant Bar

"A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work." It's rare that you have the opportunity to quote Colin Powell in a restaurant review, but his words ring true when describing the endearing—and recently expanded—Mis Sueños Restaurant Bar on the Cabo San Lucas Marina. The name translates to "My Dreams," and it's through the consistently excellent cooking and customer service that Mis Sueños creates a heavenly experience for diners. Anglers flock to Mis Sueños—chef Mardonio Dominguez prepares customers' catches five different ways, including as sashimi, blackened, Vera Cruz, or Rockefeller style—but the restaurant is a treasure for anyone who loves seafood or hearty steaks. Shrimp is served seven different ways, including tempura, a jumbo shrimp platter ($23 U.S.), and a shrimp cocktail. A great starter to share is a bowl of mushroom buttons in a spicy cream sauce; dunk hot bread. If tuna is available, try it seared with capers. Cabo San Lucas Marina next to the Cabo Plaza Hotel, Space Q, Cabo San Lucas (624) 143-0981. Daily 7 a.m.–11 p.m. MasterCard and Visa accepted. $$–$$$ A.A.

Pan di Bacco

This chic Italian café fuses "the art of Italian baking"—local, fresh, organic—with a casual yet sophisticated setting

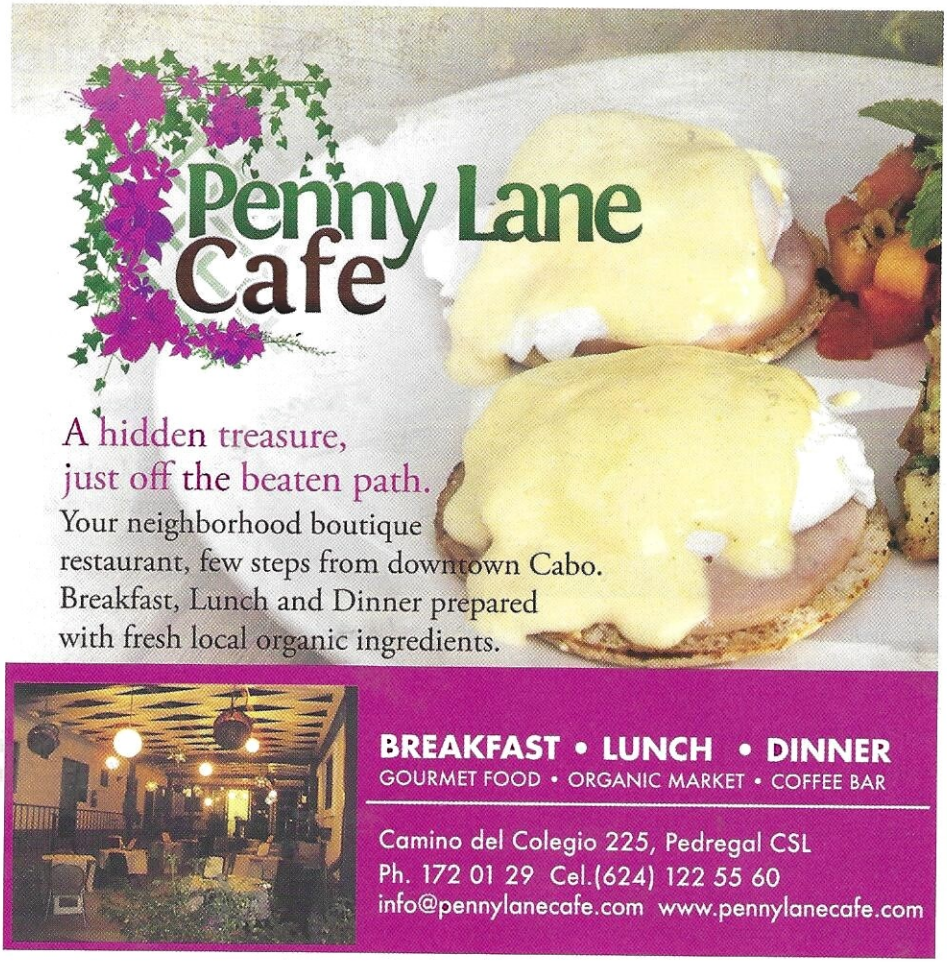


The sweet-and-sour short ribs at Mi Casa are baked in a delicious smoked chile and tamarind adobo. They come served with cilantro mashed potatoes, beans, and guacamole.

Carlos Aboyo

Carlos Aboyo

Cool down with a seafood cocktail, a variation on the popular clamato, at the Veracruz-style restaurant Mariscos Mocambo.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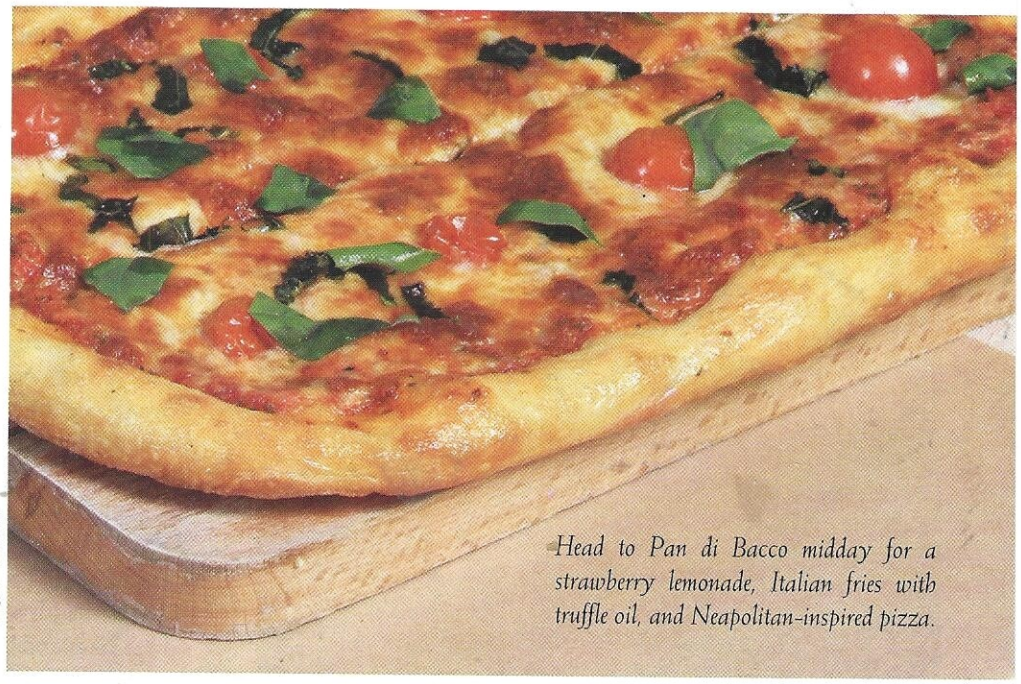
near the Cabo San Lucas Marina. For a relaxing morning, stop in for an almost-too-pretty-to-drink vanilla latte, some chocolate *pannetone*, and free Wi-Fi. The smell of freshly baked bread may be too much to resist. Return midday for a strawberry lemonade, Italian fries with truffle oil, and Neapolitan-inspired pizza; I heartily recommend the Milanesa, with salame milano, mushrooms, mozzarella, Parmesan, and tomato sauce. The team behind Pan di Bacco believes "wine isn't just for gourmets and special occasions; it's for everyone, every day." As such, they've created a wine list that's affordable and fun … and pairs excellently with a dinner menu that includes everything from light salads and antipasti to *gnocchi alla sorrentina*, DIY cutting boards, and mini-burgers. Don't leave without ordering a dessert (perhaps the traditional Neapolitan lemon tarte or classic tiramisu) with a limoncello digestif. Free valet parking 4 p.m.–midnight at the Misiones, across the street. Ignacio Zaragoza S/N, between Boulevard Marina and Lázaro Cárdenas, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-3508, www.pandibacco.com. Sun.–Thurs. 8 a.m.–11 pm, Fri.–Sat. 8 a.m.– 2 am. MasterCard and Visa accepted. $–$$$ A.A.

Peacock's

This Los Cabos dining fixture marked its grand reopening in the spring, but we're still celebrating its return. Cabo is simply not Cabo without Peacock's. The elegantly appointed restaurant's

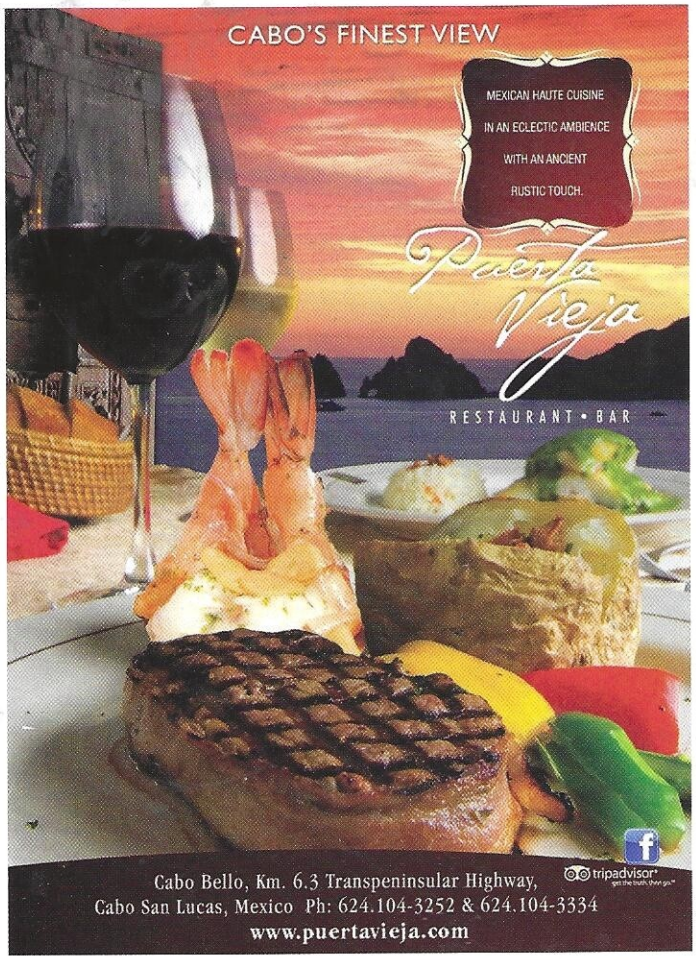


Miguel Ventura

Head to Pan di Bacco midday for a strawberry lemonade, Italian fries with truffle oil, and Neapolitan-inspired pizza.

Mis Sueños recently expanded its location on the Cabo San Lucas Marina.

commitment to superb customer service and organic, locally sourced produce and seafood remains while the ownership has also introduced a new-look menu that features many items slow-cooked in Peacock's wood-fired oven. The yellowfin tuna *tataki* appetizer is done in a black sesame crust on a bed of lime, ginger, and serrano pepper, and the hearty lobster chowder comes with oven-baked garlic grissini. Chilean chef Mary José Aravena's talents are at their best, however, with slow-cooked entrées like the red wine–cardamon reduction beef ribs (roasted for six hours until tender) and the succulent suckling pig (roasted overnight and ably complemented with tarragon, Cambray potatoes, mushrooms, and tomatoes). For those in the mood for lighter fare, the restaurant and adjoining lounge area also offer tapas and Tuscan-style pizzas. The kitchen is open, so you can watch the creative process while sipping wine or enjoying a tropical cocktail at the bar. Paseo del Pescador, near the entrance to ME Cabo, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-1858, www.peacocksrestaurant.com. Nightly 5 p.m.–midnight. AmEx, MasterCard, and Visa accepted. $$–$$$$ C.S.



Penny Lane Cafe

The beauty of Los Cabos is that you have the opportunity to escape the stresses of back home without having to want for anything—including a quality farmers market. The thrice-weekly organic farmers market at Mar Adentro Spa and Wellness Clinic rivals anything Portland or Santa Monica has to offer. And its produce is what goes directly into the menu at Penny Lane Cafe. The alfresco dining space is beyond lovely, and the menu is excellent. Come in the morning for *chilaquiles* and freshly squeezed juices. At lunch, you'll find a grilled wild salmon salad with arugula and ginger-soy dressing. Come nighttime, turn to the new, adjacent Casianos restaurant for a spontaneous dinner experience. See the full review on page 75. Mar Adentro Spa and Wellness Clinic, Camino del Colegio 225, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 172-0129, www.pennylanecafe.com. Daily 7:30 a.m.–5p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$ A.A.

Pitahayas

An evening at the award-winning Pacific Rim restaurant Pitahayas is an otherworldly experience. The magnificent (this is not an overstatement) *palapa*, the waves lapping against the sand, and the wondrous creations chef Volker Romeike pulls forth from wholesome, locally sourced ingredients make for a magical evening. Here, you can sip on a cocktail as you enjoy a beautiful Cabo sunset, then dine on starters like the duck crepes or handmade shrimp wontons as stars blanket the night's sky. Entrée highlights include the short ribs with wasabi mashed potatoes, as well as crab-crusted sea bass and twice cooked pork belly. The dessert menu is

Pitahayas is known for its Pacific Rim cuisine and ocean views.

Feast on Italian and views of the Cabo San Lucas Marina at Presto!

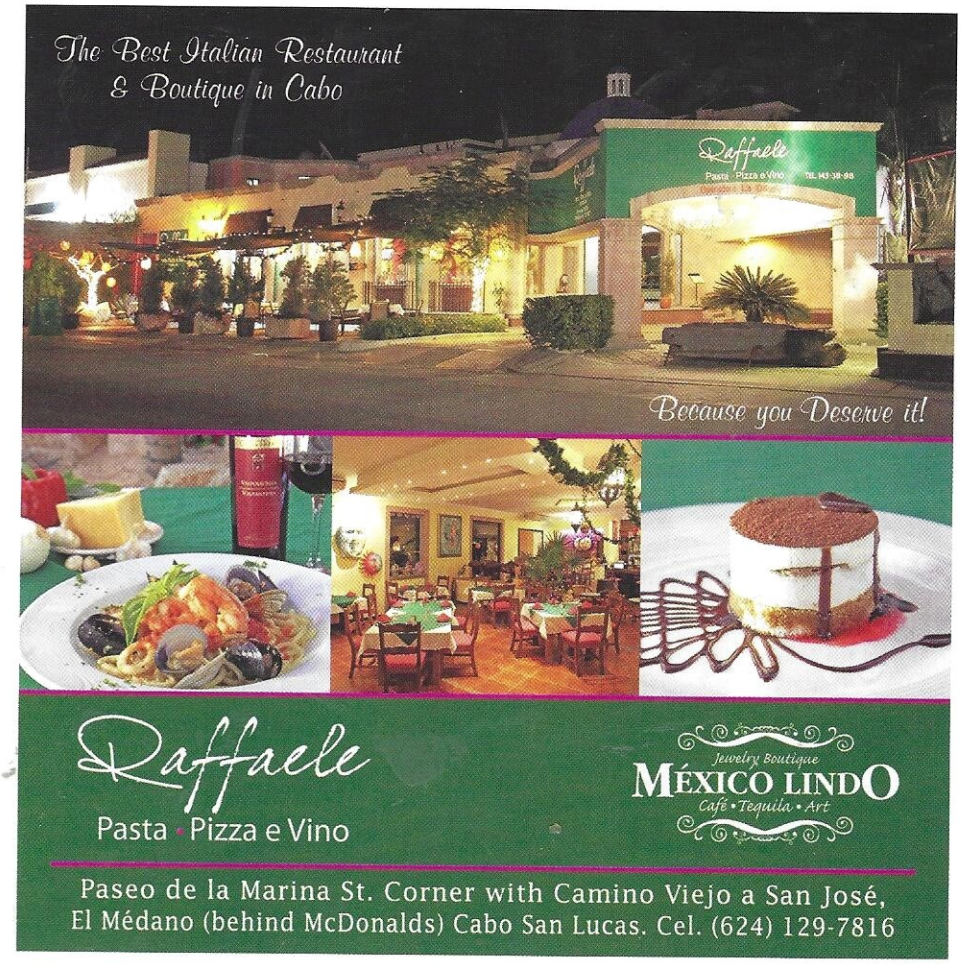
filled with confections that could easily be confused with works of art. Chief among them is crème brûlée trio. Manager José Rojas Torres ensures your experience will be extraordinary. Hacienda del Mar, Cabo del Sol, km 10 on the Tourist Corridor, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-8010, www.pitahayas.com. Nightly 5:30 p.m.–10:30 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$ A.A.

Presto

"Abracadabra!" and "Presto chango!" The words conjure up images of magicians pulling rabbits from hats and waving wands in the air. The chefs at this appropriately named Italian eatery on the Cabo San Lucas Marina daily perform feats of magic in an intimate space that could be described as a hidden gem. It's a no-frills spot that emphasizes flavor and authenticity above all else. Chef Roberto Masciadri hails from Lake Cuomo, and he's brought a wealth of experience and recipes with him to Los Cabos. Our perennial go-tos include the three-cheese pizza prepared with mozzarella, blue cheese, and cream cheese (a local favorite) and the lasagna. Pastas are made mostly in-house, save the spaghetti, which is imported from Italy. Not only is the menu packed with must-try options; it's also one of the most affordable menus in all of Cabo. So, go ahead: Splurge on the tiramisu. You won't regret it. Marina Golden Zone, Cabo San Lucas Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-6011, www.goldenzonecabo.com. Major credit cards and vouchers accepted. Daily 11 a.m–11 p.m. $–$$ A.A.

Puerta Vieja

Its name means "old door," and indeed the gateway to Puerta Vieja is a 150-year-old portal that leads guests to an attractive restaurant known in equal measures for its international menu, charm, and affordable prices. For 16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years, owner Manuel Bobadilla and chef Roberto Rendon have refined and perfected a that appeals to both taste buds and wallets. Choose from daily musical entertainment in the salon (including a weekly Cuban-themed party), the view of Land's End from the sunset terrace, or the intimate setting of the wine cellar, which houses a wine selection worthy of the most discriminating oenophile; all make for an enchanting experience. Begin your dinner with the grilled asparagus with goat cheese or clam chowder served in a bread bowl. The signature dish is a feast that includes New Zealand lamb chops, jumbo shrimp, and lobster tail. There are many tempting options ranging from Neopolitan-style lasagna to New York steaks that it is difficult to choose only one. The portions are so generous, though, you'll want to bring your appetite. Finish off the evening by ordering a Mexican coffee and watch the tableside fire show. Km 6.3 on the Tourist Corridor, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 104-3252, www.puertavieja.com. Daily noon–11 p.m. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$$ C.M.

Francisco Estrada

The views from Puerta Vieja are magical, and so is the menu.

Raffaele Pasta Pizza e Vino

You can't have too much of a good thing, and the newest Italian restaurant in Los Cabos quickly proved itself to be a worthy addition to a lineup that already included several stellar options. Starters like the *carpaccio di pesce* (fish carpaccio) are perfectly prepared, blending locally sourced ingredients with traditional Italian recipes. Entrée highlights include the limon piccata scalopini, *fettucini amatriciana* (ask for a little extra heat), and the decadent rigatoni carbonara. You won't go wrong with any of the pizzas made in Raffaele's mesquite oven: The adventurous can request the eponymous pie, made with potato and Italian sausage. Top your meal off with a cappuccino or selection from the extensive wine list and a slice of tiramisu. Camino Viejo a San José at the corner of Paseo de la Marina, Cabo San Lucas, cell:(624)129-7816, www.italianrestaurantcabo.com. Mon.–Sat. 3p.m.–11p.m, Sun. 2p.m.–10p.m. Major credit cards and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ A.A.

Romeo & Julieta

Chef Matias Forte is a bit of a superstar in Los Cabos, and he has built his following one bite at a time. The authentic Italian, ingredient-driven menu at Romeo & Julieta is the perfect complement to a setting that is utter-

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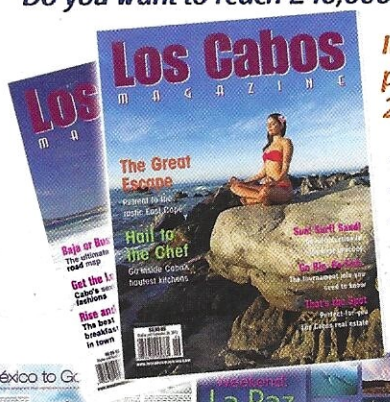

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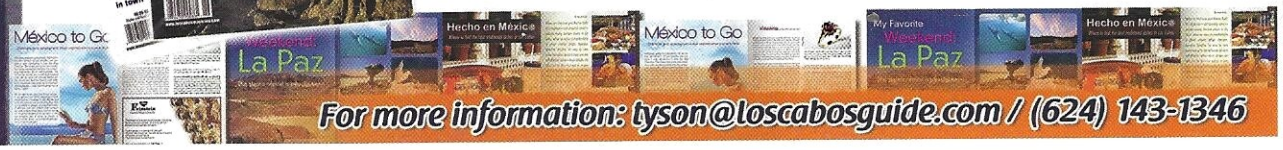

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Francisco Estrada

The chicken at Romeo & Julieta is grilled to perfection.

Francisco Estrada

For a healthy bite, try this salad at Solomon's Landing.

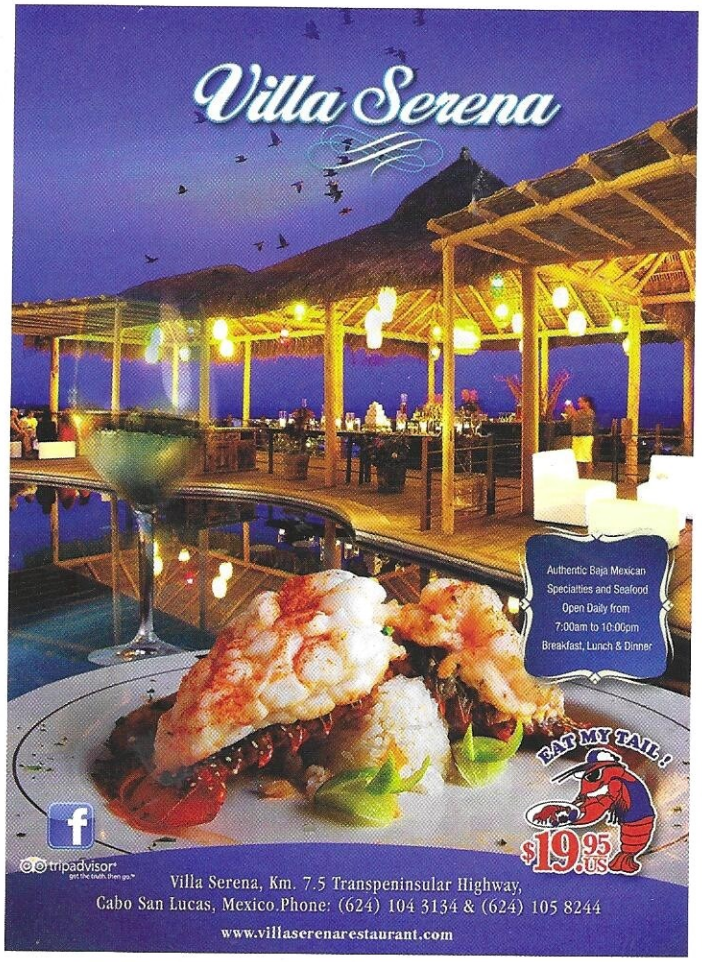
ly romantic. Enjoy a candlelit dinner of rich carbonara—or any of the 16 pasta options—garlicky mussels in white wine sauce, and gelato. You'll feel absolutely transported, especially when you pair your meal with a selection from the extensive wine list. Boulevard Marina and Camino del Cerro, CaboSan Lucas, (624) 143-0225, www.restaurantromeoyjulieta.com. Sun. 2 p.m.–midnight, Mon.–Sat. 4 p.m.–midnight. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$$ A.A.

Solomon's Landing

Brian Solomon is a people pleaser—in the best way imaginable. The menu at his popular Cabo San Lucas Marina mainstay is one of the largest, most diverse I've ever seen, and you're guaranteed to find something—or several somethings—you'd like to order. More impressive, though, is the kitchen's ability to hit the mark on such a wide variety of cuisines. Stop by in the early morning for a hearty, traditional Mexican breakfast of green *chilaquiles* with chicken and fresh squeezed orange juice. Aching for the comforts of home? You can't go wrong with the French toast. Lunch and dinner options include a 12-ounce filet mignon, 20-ounce certified Angus rib eye steak, and the spicy Northern Italian Trio Pasta with shrimp, sausage, and chicken. And we have not even mentioned the separate, five-page sushi menu; it includes options for everyone from sushi initiates to connoisseurs. Pair scallop carpaccio, a chef specialty, with a mango mojito (a nice twist on the classic). Or go with the soft-shell crab Spider Roll or Seafood Roll, which is made with the catch of the day, spicy tuna, shrimp, crab, and octopus served on a bed of spicy orange and sesame sauce. There are weekly musical performances as well as a monthly wine pairing. Boulevard Marina, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 143-3050, www.solomonslandingcabo.com. Daily 7 a.m.–11 p.m. Discover, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ A.A.

Sunset da Mona Lisa

It's been called the most romantic spot in all of Los Cabos, and the young-and-in-love flock to the multitiered terrace restaurant to dine on exquisite Italian and look out at the iconic sunset over Land's End. But it takes a small army to man the kitchen at Sunset da Mona Lisa, one of the most talked-about Italian restaurants on the Baja Peninsula. Three culinary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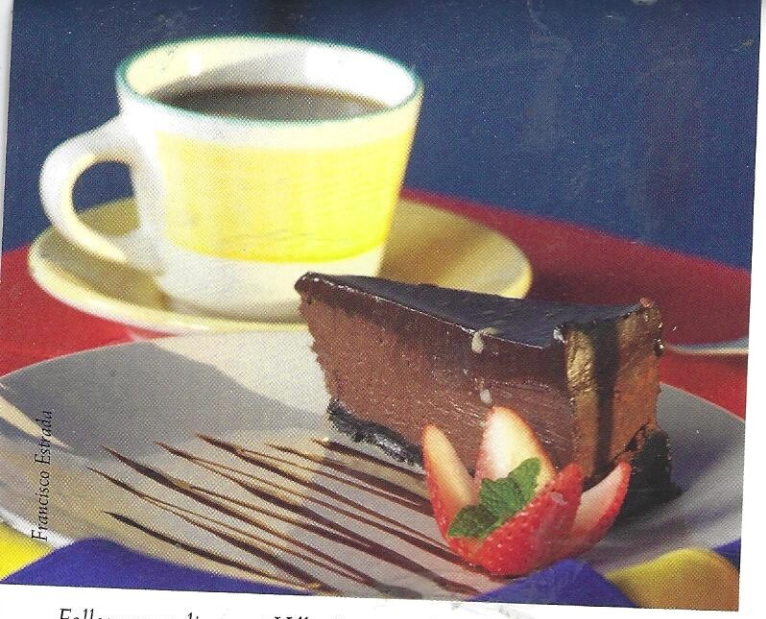

Francisco Estrada

Follow your dinner at Villa Serena with a decadent chocolate dessert.

experts oversee a team of 15 chefs. (Turn to "The Triple Threat," page 95, to learn more.) The menu here was crafted to cater to all types of dietary restrictions (including gluten sensitivities), and there's something for everyone. We began our dinner with an appetizer of thick-cut, carpaccio-style tuna that popped with notes of soy and citrus. We continued with house-made gnocchi filled with crab in a white truffle cream and beef tenderloin and vegetables cooked right at the table, on a sizzling volcanic rock. As we ate, we drank from a wonderful malbec. Come dessert time, we switched course: pairing Oaxacan hot chocolates with panna cotta. Valet parking. Km 6 on the Tourist Corridor, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-8160, www.sunsetmonalisa.com. Nightly 5 p.m.–10 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $$–$$$$ A.A.

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Sunset Point

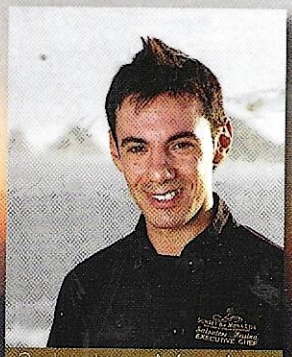
The sister restaurant to Sunset da Mona Lisa provides patrons the same signature sunset view in a more casual environ. The pizza and wine bar features more than 180 labels of wine from Italy, South America, Europe, and México. Tapas at the bar are free from 4 to 6 p.m., but you can also opt for one of the tasting menus; either is generous enough to share, accompanied with appropriate wines. The Deluxe Tasting includes a salad or the fritto misto, a meat and cheese platter, a trio of wood-fired gourmet pizzas, a platter of thinly sliced steak that you cook yourself on a heated lava rock, ending with a choice of dessert that might be tiramisu, crème brûlée, fruit plate, or a sweet pizza made with bananas, coconut, nuts, and a chocolate sauce. The specialty is gourmet pizza, but many Sunset da Mona Lisa items may be ordered. Km 6 on the Tourist Corridor, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-8160, www.sunsetmonalisa.com. Nightly 5 p.m.–10 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$$ S.B.

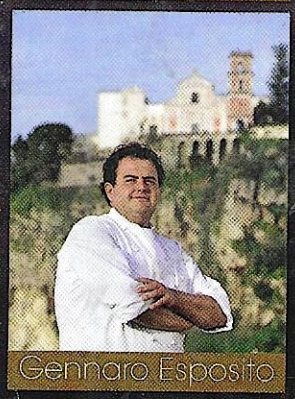
Villa Serena

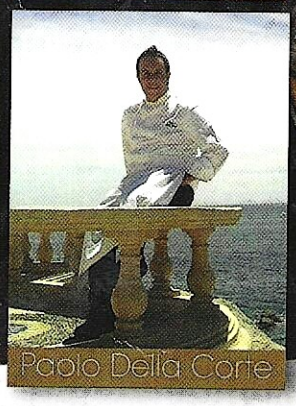
Tiered patios frame a large swimming pool, allowing for Villa Serena's casual, *palapa*-shaded seaside atmosphere, excellent seafood and Mexican cuisine, and gorgeous unobstructed views of the Sea of Cortés. The scene is so tropically beautiful—with palm trees waving in the breeze below and sailboats cruising offshore—that every drink should come with a tiny umbrella. Lobster tail is the specialty of the house, but freshly caught treasures abound; options include salty appetizers such as shrimp cocktail, oysters Rockefeller, and clam chowder, as well as entrées like seafood enchiladas and whole red snapper served with rice, beans, and steamed vegetables. Surf and turf fans will enjoy the Villa Serena special, which is loaded with shrimp, lobster, and lamb chops, while turf-only fans may want to opt for a selection from the premium lineup of hand-trimmed steaks. It's hard to go wrong with anything on the dinner menu, which also has superb seafood salads and a shrimp-and-spinach-stuffed chicken breast. Just make sure you leave room for dessert. Villa Serena boasts several decadent meal cappers, including a delicious double chocolate cake. Km 7.5 on the Tourist Corridor, Cabo San Lucas, (624) 145-8244, www.villaserena restaurant.com. Daily 7 a.m.–10 p.m. AmEx, MasterCard, Visa, and vouchers accepted. $–$$ C.S.

The Triple Threat

Sunset da Mona Lisa boasts three world-class chefs


Salvatore Messina


Gennaro Esposito


Paolo Della Corte

It takes a small army to man the kitchen at Sunset da Mona Lisa, one of the most talked-about Italian restaurants on the Baja Peninsula. Three culinary experts oversee a team of 15 chefs.

Thirtysomething Salvatore Messina hails from Milano, Italy, and is the youngest executive chef in Los Cabos. His unique talent and multicultural experience allow him to create signature dishes that are as exquisite as they are untraditional dishes. Messina graduated from ALMA, the world's leading educational and training center for chefs and sommeliers working with Italian cuisine. He has worked alongside the most famous chefs from each region in Italy, cheffing in several Michelin-starred restaurants. At age 25, Messina moved to the United Kingdom, where he worked as sous-chef at London's renowned Soho House. During this period, he learned how to merge traditional Italian flavors with the contemporary restaurant's innovative techniques. His desire to learn more about artisanal cuisine brought Messina to México. In Baja, he found a peninsula with characteristics similar to the Mediterranean region. At Sunset da Mona Lisa, a restaurant known for its Italian fine dining, he found a new home.

Two-star Michelin chef Gennaro Esposito joined Sunset da Mona Lisa this spring. Not only has Esposito changed many things on the menu and in the kitchen's organizational structure, but he has also assisted in bringing is his right-hand man: Chef Paolo Della Corte has extensive experience in several Michelin-starred restaurants, including The Fat Duck, which was awarded three Michelin stars. —Sandra Berry

Francisco Estrada

Overview Map
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El Tecolote
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(Formerly Bahía de los Muertos)
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Los Frailes
Cerritos
El Refugio
Caduaño
Lengua de Buey
La Malda
Punta Lobera
San Pedro de la Soledad
Palo Escopeta
Punta Peruchera
Elias Calles
El Salto de los García
Cardonal
Santa Anita
Boca de la Vinorama
MÉXICO
Gulf of México
Gulf of California (Sea of Cortés)
Pacific Ocean
San José Viejo
La Fortuna
El Salteador
Puerto Los Cabos
Punta Gorda
Los Zacatitos
Candelaria
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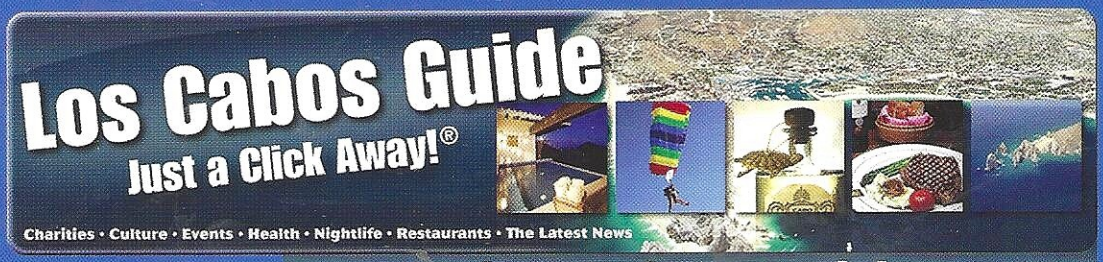

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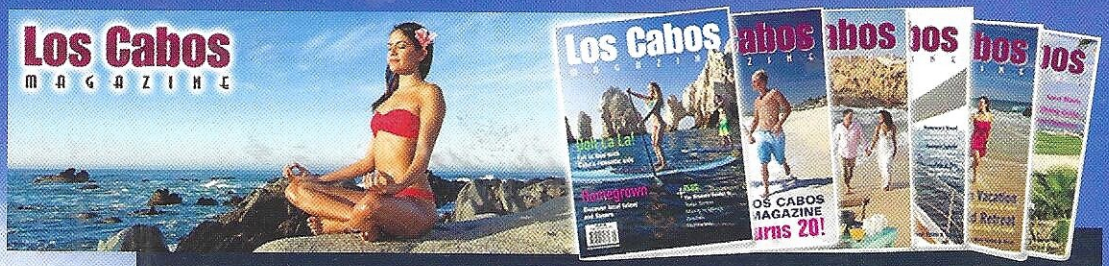

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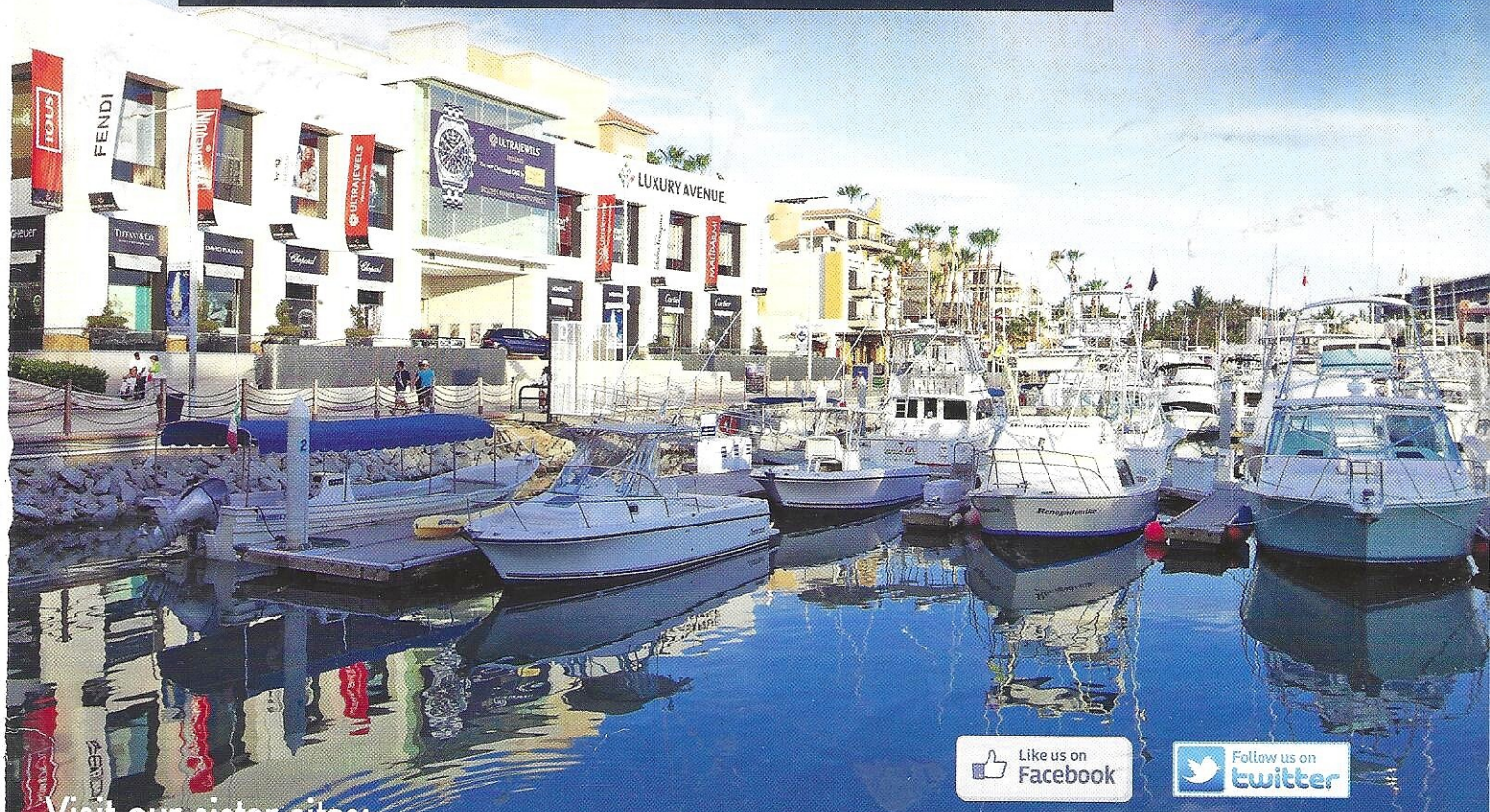

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